

OBITUARY

Jane Jacobs: her life and work

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ABSTRACT *In April 2006, Jane Jacobs—analyst of cities—died. As written in the Financial Times obituary of 27 April 2006 “...She spent much of her career fighting for one deceptively simple principle: leave cities alone and let them develop by themselves ...”. In spring 2004 Gert-Jan Hospers visited Jane Jacobs in her Toronto home and conducted lengthy interviews with her about her beliefs, life and work. A future article based on this now invaluable material has been commissioned by European Planning Studies. However on the sad occasion of her death, and with the work of transcribing interview material underway, it seemed appropriate to create an account of key observations made by Jane Jacobs in that interview to explain her philosophy and practice vein more clearly than occurs in her always readable and influential books. As an early, maybe the first, evolutionary urban economist and modern inventor of the concept of “social capital”, it is especially appropriate to include this obituary in the journal, which has always been a welcoming host to literature composed from such perspectives.*

Biography

Jane Jacobs-Butzner was born on 4 May 1916 in Scranton, a mining town in the American state Pennsylvania. Here the family Butzner had a family doctor practice. After graduating from high school, where she claims she was bored and secretly read other books during the class, she became a voluntary journalist with the local newspaper. After one and a half years Jacobs spreads her wings and moves from provincial Scranton to cosmopolitan New York. The metropolis is, however, in the middle of the Great Depression; finding a job is far from being easy. Jacobs accepts all kinds of jobs, varying from journalist to secretary, but sometimes cannot find work at all. In the periods in which she is unemployed, she takes long walks through New York and observes the hustle and bustle of the city. She also follows courses in physics and social subjects at the University of

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Columbia, just because she likes it. Later she says that this time in New York taught her a lot about city life and the social-economic dynamics it radiated, a theme which reoccurs in her work.

While working for the Office of War Information, Jane met her husband, the architect Robert Hyde Jacobs, whom she married in 1944. They moved into a house in the cosy New York neighbourhood of Greenwich Village and raised their three children there. In the meantime, Jacobs writes for the magazine *Architectural Forum*, where she applies herself more to urban development and planning. Then she finds out how little the city councillors' tendency to plan corresponds to the reality of city life. Robert Moses, chief adviser to Mayor Fiorello La Guardia of New York at that time, for example, drove a New Deal funded policy in which small-scale and lively neighbourhoods were to be replaced by megalomaniac projects like business centres, motorways and skyscrapers. Even her own neighbourhood was threatened by this urban monotony, and Jacobs had had enough so she started to write in opposition to the Moses ideology. In 1961, her first work appeared as *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. The book caused a shock in the world of urban planning and Jacobs' name was immediately established.

Jacobs not only had a trenchant writing style, she suited the action to the word. Under her supervision demonstrations and neighbourhood protests were held against what she calls the "Federal Bulldozer"-approach. Jacobs was arrested twice while doing this. The active attitude of Jacobs is also clear from her protests against the Vietnam War, which she enforced by permanently moving to Toronto, with her family, after 30 years in New York. Until her death she lived there happily down town, on Albany Avenue 69. Although Jacobs did not always agree with the policy of the municipality, according to her Toronto continued to be a model of a diverse and vital city, or "a city which works". Through the years Jacobs evolved her vision of cities in *The Economy of Cities* (1969) and *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* (1984). Furthermore, she was, on request and unasked, involved in matters that occupied Canadian politics, like regionalism in Quebec. This societal involvement resulted, among others, in the book *The Question of Separatism* (1980) and articles in national newspapers and magazines.

Gradually, apart from urban interest, Jacobs developed an interest in philosophical and social themes. From the 1990s she occupied herself with penetrating the fundamental values in economy and society. In *Systems of Survival* (1992) she emphasized the inherent differences between the work of trade and that of administration, while in *The Nature of Economies* (1998) she drew parallels between the evolution of biological and economic systems. In 2004 *Dark Age Ahead* appeared, a book in which Jacobs warned contemporary society against the dangers of unbridled progressive thinking. If it had been up to her, this would not have been her last book. Even though Jacobs was advanced in years and suffered from physical ailments, she was determined to write two more books, namely *A Short Biography of the Human Race* and *Uncovering the Economy*. Just like her previous works, these books were intended to get a lot of media attention when finished—but, as in the past, she would have rejected every form of recognition. Very exceptionally, in 1991, she accepted the Toronto Arts for Life Time Achievement on Jane Jacobs Day; from that moment on, she structurally refused all prizes and honour doctorates. Her motto was: “I don’t know who this celebrity called Jane Jacobs is—it’s not me. You either do your work or you’re a celebrity; I’d rather do my work”.

Critical Consideration

Compared to the work of many other critical thinkers, the *œuvre* of Jane Jacobs is relatively easily surveyed. Her work consists of in total seven books and a number of notes varying from short magazine articles to send-in letters to newspapers. Towards writing, Jacobs cherished a love–hate relation: “I would be anything else than a writer, while I’m trying to write. Nothing else, when I’ve got something finished”. Sitting behind her typewriter, it took her about 8 years to finish a book, and “87% of my ideas disappear in the waste paper basket”. Her hard work was not without results though: the books are all bestsellers and some are translated from English into several languages. From all these books reprints still appear, especially by Jacobs’ favourite publishing house Random House.

Concerning chronology and themes, Jacobs’ work can roughly be divided into two parts. From the 1960s to the middle of the 1980s Jacobs mainly wrote about the problems of cities and their role in the economy and society. She developed her ideas on this in three books which each have the word “cities” in the title. Her interest, however, seems to have shifted since the 1990s to more social-philosophical issues, which also resulted in three books. In these books Jacobs dealt with the nature of fundamental cultural values and their social-economic meaning. Finally, there is one book that stands separate from the others because of its focus on the Canadian province Quebec: *The Question of Separatism* (1980). Below the different themes of Jacobs’ *œuvre* will be examined.

Cities and Diversity

Ever since her time in New York Jacobs had lost her heart to city life. She loved the urban dynamic and was fascinated by the people who live, work and amuse themselves in cities. “The city has something to offer to everyone, since it is created by everyone”, is one of her famous sayings. This vision is in sharp contrast to the megaproject ideal of many city planners and councillors from her New York period, like Le Corbusier and Moses. According

to Jacobs, urban development could not be planned behind a drawing table. For her a city was not something abstract. From the title of her first book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) it becomes clear that she preferred to use a biological metaphor: the city is like a living being that is born, grows, matures, decays and can revive. The elements of the city—the people, streets, parks, neighbourhoods, the government, the economy—cannot exist without one another and are just like the organs of the human body connected with each other. In this evolutionary approach streets play an important role: they are the lifeblood where urban dwellers meet each other and where trade and commercial activities take place. The street is the décor of a “sidewalk ballet”, according to Jacobs, which determines the security, social cohesion and economic development of cities. From this perspective, even taking out the garbage or having a talk with a passer-by is a deed of dramatic expression. These every day acts make a city into a vital city.

In *The Death and Life* (1961) Jacobs expanded on the physical conditions which are the foundation of the street ballet. For a good performance of the urban play, she claimed, the décor needs to meet four conditions. Firstly, neighbourhoods should have several functions, so that there are people on the streets at all hours of the day. If in a neighbourhood there is only activity at night, or in the morning—like in many business or commuter areas—activities like hotel and catering, culture and retail trade hardly get the chance to blossom. In neighbourhoods with a mix of functions, however, throughout the day these facilities are needed, which in itself starts a process of reinforcement. Secondly, Jacobs believed that a city benefits from short building blocks and an intricate street structure. Pedestrians must have the possibility to go round, take a different route sometimes, and thereby discover something new. Thirdly, there should be enough variation in the residential area: buildings that differ in age, level of maintenance and function contribute to a varied and colourful city image. Lastly, Jacobs propagated a high degree of concentration of people in one place. She supported compact city neighbourhoods where different kinds of households and individuals (families, elderly, entrepreneurs, artists, migrants, students) live together. The fact is that this variety on the small scale results in the critical mass which is necessary to maintain an equally varied supply of local facilities. In such a busy and diverse neighbourhood the local supermarket, the kebab shop and the chain store can coexist without problems.

Jacobs emphasized that the spatial conditions for a street ballet cannot do without one another. Only in combination do they lead to the diversity that is needed for a blossoming city life. In this way, urban diversity ensures that there are people close by at every moment of the day. If there are enough “eyes on the street”, she claimed, crime is not given a chance and the collective feeling of security increases. The variety in functions, buildings and people also plays an important role in maintaining the social cohesion. It is not so much about keeping in touch with the neighbours, but rather that there is enough interaction on the street, at the bus stops or in shops. This is how people get the feeling of belonging to a community, or being at home somewhere. In order to indicate these loose neighbourhood networks, Jacobs talked about “social capital”, a term which is very popular nowadays among city governors and academics. Not only socially, but also economically seen, urban diversity is of great importance, according to Jacobs. In an area of the city with different kinds of suppliers and buyers, entrepreneurs can share their facilities, such as office spaces and machines, and profit from a varied supply of knowledge and expertise. The cross-fertilization which results from that works as a

magnet for companies that are looking for a new place to establish. Additionally, the mix of old and new buildings in the neighbourhood gives every type of entrepreneur a chance. In this way, it is possible that a modern stockbroker's office and a traditional furniture maker are neighbours. According to Jacobs' motto "new ideas often need old buildings", a city neighbourhood can grow into a true breeding ground of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.

Cities and Economy

Although in her first work Jacobs paid special attention to the city life of every day, in the two books that followed, she placed the city in a broader historical and economic context. In *The Economy of Cities* (1969) Jacobs asked the simple though classical question "why some cities grow and others stagnate and decay"—a theme that many thinkers since the Greek historian Herodotus occupied themselves with. In her book, Jacobs introduced an analysis that contradicts the prevailing opinions on urban development. Generally, one assumes that the agricultural era preceded the period in which cities flourished. According to Jacobs, however, cities already existed before humankind even started with agriculture; better still, it was the cities that made agricultural activities possible. Ultimately, Jacobs claimed, every form of economic development has a basis in the city. In order to build her thesis, she referred to a number of examples and anecdotes. For example, it is clear from archaeological research that the first cities were trading posts: this trade at the local market then initiated organized agriculture and cattle breeding. Furthermore, the development of the Japanese bicycle industry is used as an example: the import into Japanese cities of bicycles from the West drove local entrepreneurs to open more and more repair workshops. In the end, the Japanese became so good at repairing the imported bicycles that they—also in order to distinguish themselves from their local rivals—started to develop, produce and export their own bicycles. Jacobs concluded from these kinds of examples the general thesis that cities grow by treating, renewing and exporting imported goods and services, which results in income that can be used to import new items. The activities of the city offer the best setting for this innovation and "import replacement", said Jacobs, because entrepreneurs will continuously try to be ahead of the local competition. Jacobs transferred this regularity into the formula: $D + A \rightarrow nD$, in which D is division of labour in a given economic system, new activities of entrepreneurs and nD resulting in new forms of labour division. This comparison simply shows the way in which new activities develop from existing ones—and thus how the economy of cities grows.

In *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* (1984) Jacobs went one step further in praise of the city: cities have not just played an important role in history, they are also the motor behind national economic development. According to her, economists—whether they are liberal or Marxist—wrongly assumed that countries form the relevant economic units. Influenced by Adam Smith's classic *The Wealth of Nations* Jacobs argued however, that national prosperity is nothing more than the sum of the economic performance of individual cities in a country. Ultimately, trade and commercial activities always play at the level of a city and the region on which it has an influence. According to Jacobs, macro-economic figures like growth or unemployment percentages gave a biased view: they are just abstract numbers which do not do justice to the big economic differences which can exist within a country among the separate cities and regions. These differences are an explanation for the paradox that a country can do well economically, on paper, while some of the inhabitants

live in great poverty. In this context, Jacobs pointed to the situation in Brazil, the US and Italy in the 1960s. She said that national policy is moreover an improper instrument to solve regional inequalities in a country. The national government had better leave the economic politics to the cities, not just because it is there that prosperity is created, but also because local politicians know better which measures are needed in a city because of their knowledge of the local situation.

The plea of Jacobs to think from the concrete, local and small-scale can be found back in the contributions she made to the debate in the Canadian politics. Titles of articles such as *Downtown for the people* and *Vital little plan* speak volumes. Also in *The Question of Separatism: The Struggle of Quebec over Sovereignty* (1984) about the regionalism of the French-speaking province of Quebec, the pragmatic approach of Jacobs is clearly visible. Politically seen, the wish of Quebec to be independent may be controversial but, according to Jacobs, from an economic point of view the separation would have pure advantages for both the province itself and Canada as a whole. She believed separatism resulted from the rivalry between Quebec and the neighbouring, but much wealthier province, Ontario. In order to diminish the economic differences between the provinces, the Canadian government put aside huge sums of tax money for support measures to Quebec. The mainly English speaking inhabitants of Ontario find this unjustified and reacted even more against their French-speaking country folk. If Quebec separated from Canada gaining self-government this impasse could end: local economic initiatives might get a better chance of succeeding, the inhabitants of Ontario would not have a reason to complain anymore and the Canadian government would also be released from big cost pressures. This practical logic was not appreciated by many Canadians. However, she was not discouraged by that. On the contrary, Jacobs took every opportunity to bring forward her opinion on topical political questions, orally and in writing.

Fundamental Values

“Cities—how shall I put it?—they’re the crux of so many different subjects, so many different puzzles. There’s almost nothing you can think of that cities don’t provide some insight into”, according to Jacobs. One of the issues that Jacobs often came across when studying cities, was the difference of opinion between local entrepreneurs and town councillors. Based on these observations she developed throughout the years a more general theory of the distinction between undertaking enterprises and governing. In *Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics* (1992) Jacobs presented a theory in the form of a series of discussion between five fictional New Yorkers who discuss moral issues. In this “didactic dialogue”—after Plato, the brainchild of this form of writing, also called “Platonic dialogue”—the persons conclude that our existing order of labour knows two moral systems: the “trade syndrome” (business community) and the “guards syndrome” (the council). The trade syndrome is the domain of entrepreneurs and is the model for commercial values like competition, efficiency, entrepreneurship, innovation and keeping to agreements. However, the guards’ syndrome is relevant to people who work in the public sector; this group is mainly led by civil virtues like obedience, discipline, hierarchy, loyalty and feelings of honour. Jacobs named both systems “syndromes” because their elements cannot do without each other and show an inner connection. For a healthy development of society, traders and guards need each other—without trade there is no prosperity and without maintenance

of law and order, after all, no trade. Despite their interdependence, the two sorts of morals needed to be kept strictly separate, according to Jacobs. If they mingle, these “monstrous mixtures” will harm society. For example, some private virtues are public sins and vice versa. Something which is, for example, a favour for a friend according to an entrepreneur, can easily be seen as corruption by a councillor. However, in politics changes in policies can often not be prevented, while the principle “a deal is a deal” is sacred for entrepreneurs. Because private and public values often exclude one another, it should be taken into account that if they are mixed there will be value conflicts, according to Jacobs. To her mind the possibilities for “syndrome friendly creativity” (in modern terms: public–private cooperation) were very restricted.

Just like *System of Survival* (1992), *The Nature of Economics* (1999) was also written in the form of a Platonic dialogue. The five New Yorkers from Jacobs’ former work now sit around the coffee table and wonder what economy and nature actually have in common. Via all kinds of sideways and examples, they recognize that economic systems essentially function according to the same principles as nature. Finally, economic systems are just like the ecosystem “dynamically stable”; according to the New York company, which means that they can survive by rectifying changes within the system itself. These corrections take place through complex processes like positive, self-reinforcing feedback, negative check mechanisms and natural defensive reactions. The similarities between nature and economy should get much more attention according to Jacobs. Therefore, *The Nature of Economics* (1999) can be seen as a plea for the idea of “bio mimicry”: the studying and imitating of natural phenomena in the hope of gaining new insights in other application areas. A well-known application of bio mimicry is the brothers Wright, who developed the wings of their plane after the example of the wings of a vulture. Jacobs strongly believed in such naturally stimulated innovation. If we looked more at biology, she makes the New Yorkers conclude, we could develop an economic system that is not just efficient, but also ecologically justified.

The fondness for fundamental issues that Jacobs developed in the 1990s was clear as well from her most recent book, which she ominously titled *Dark Age Ahead* (2004). In this book, which is mainly focused on North American current affairs, five fundamental institutions are identified: the family, higher education, the independence of science, the tax system and the self-governing by professional groups. According to Jacobs, these institutions are nothing less than the foundation on which the Western civilization is built. The worrisome thing, however, is that these societal pillars are deteriorating now, especially in the US. In this context she pointed out recent developments like the increased number of divorces, the fight for students among educational institutions, the dependence of universities on externally financed research, the waning tax morale and the accounting scandals. Jacobs feared that if this trend continues, than “societal dementia” would occur: the generations after us will not be aware of the deep rooted and binding character of the five aforementioned institutions—with the unavoidable consequence that society would be disrupted. In order to turn the tide, Jacobs made an appeal that reminds one of the biblical principle “Explore many things, but keep the good thing”. She warned Westerners off the unbridled progressive thinking of today and the haughtiness and overestimation of oneself involved. If we do not want to become the victim of what the old Greeks used to call “hubris” (overconfidence), we should, according to her, cherish our institutions. She referred to the recent economic rise of Japan and Ireland: both countries having

successfully anticipated new developments, but at the same time they purposefully held on to their national cultural traditions.

An Appraisal of Jacobs' Work

Jacobs had a trenchant writing style and did not make any attempt to disguise her opinion. It is therefore not surprising that her work caused vituperative reactions. Especially Jacobs' praise of cities as the driving force behind prosperity and welfare seemed a little naïve to many. It almost seems that Jacobs said that living in the countryside is impossible. Other critics focus on Jacobs' thoughts that mankind naturally has a passion for the vivacity of the city. With her plea for small-scaled cities, diversity, short building blocks, and high population density she emphasized in each case the structural working of the physical environment for city life. According to some, this goes too far and the danger of "physical determinism" is enormous: in other words, Jacobs wrongly suggested that the spatial design of the city determines the way people treat each other and organize their lives.

Strangely enough, most of the criticism is not so much aimed at the content of her ideas, but at the form in which she presented them. Jacobs' work is often dismissed as unscientific or even amateurish. Especially in her later books about fundamental values in which she used Platonic dialogues, this would not meet the scientific standards of objectivity, ability to generalize and empirical testing. Furthermore, critics wondered if Jacobs as a relative outsider even had a right to speak on themes that she had not graduated in. Exactly the city planners and economists that Jacobs criticized value their own education, and therefore they seldom take non-colleagues seriously. In discussions on her book, Jacobs is usually accused of not conforming to scientific discourse, the prevailing paradigms and the relevant literature.

Although Jacobs may have followed a couple of subjects at university, she never finished an academic study. Nevertheless, at the same time, that is maybe where her power lies: she was not hindered by existing knowledge and was therefore capable of approaching an issue relatively unbiased. Among the many specialists who only partly occupy themselves with reality, she did not avoid the "grand questions". Jacobs herself for that matter did not agree so much with the belief of many in the relevance of science *per se*, a phenomenon that she described as "credentialism": an almost religious respect for everything academic. Jacobs distrusted so-called "experts" and the "credits" that they are awarded by society. She considered the jargon of experts simply as intellectual bragging that diverts attention away from the issues which really matter in unruly reality. She also claimed that scientific debates have a strongly ideological nature. This infighting in science is reprehensible because "Ideology does not solve problems. Solving problems solves problems", she said.

Methodology and Style

Jacobs described the approach that she followed when studying reality as "Seek truth from facts", a motto that she borrowed from Deng Xiaoping. In contrast to many scientists who try to explain reality through an abstract, general theory (deduction), Jacobs saw the world on the contrary from the concrete, visible and everyday (induction). "I just describe the things as they are", she said herself. That is why Jacobs did not want to be called an expert or authority, but rather "author". Especially from experiences in her own life,

history or the news, she tried to derive regularities. Only if in the jumble of facts, experiences and happenings a pattern is recognizable, would she advance to generalizations. This method is clearly seen in the lively writing style of Jacobs. Despite—or maybe because of—her unsystematic way of working, her books are a pleasure to read: by means of connecting anecdotes, numbers, historical examples and personal experiences, she automatically ends up at a general insight. In her books about cities, this way of reporting leads to “urban montage”: the reader has the idea of going along with Jacobs and a camera around the city and recording city life here and there.

Also in her later work we clearly see these facts based “Jacobs’ method”. In *Systems of Survival* (1992) English youth gangs, the pre-historic cultures of India, and the debt crisis of the Third World are just as easily staged as the influence of the Italian Mob in Canada, the customs of the East-African tribe “I” and the adventures of her father-in-law in the American Civil War. It is therefore not surprising that Jacobs used a large number of sources; she did not get her inspiration from the most recent scientific article, but in contrast, from classical works, popular-scientific bestsellers, autobiographies and national newspapers. If her books refer to other literature, then it is the Bible, the *Politeia* of Plato, the biography of Benjamin Franklin or an article from the *Wall Street Journal* or *The Globe and Mail*. In order to penetrate reality, in short, Jacobs trusted the most direct observation, the everyday and common sense. Especially that common sense, paradoxically, made her a radical thinker. Every critic of Jacobs admits that her work made them think. The economist Robert Lucas, for example, once said that the book *Cities and the Wealth of Nations* (1969) brought him to study the relationship between knowledge, innovation and economic growth—a contribution for which he would later, in 1995, get a Nobel Prize.

Jacobs’ Work Today

If there is someone who deserved the label “critical thinker” then it is Jane Jacobs. It is difficult to pigeonhole this exceptional woman, just like many gifted intellectuals. Even though she wrote about cities, the economy and fundamental societal issues, she was anything but a city planner, economist or social scientist. It is better to characterize her as the “flea in the fur” of these professional groups; the most important motive for her to write a book was always dissatisfaction with the prevailing views in science and politics, the well-spring of creativity. This critical attitude made Jacobs the “enfant terrible”: she saw the world with a refreshing open-mindedness of a child and did not let herself be stopped by arguments about authority. We have to take for granted that her analyses were therefore sometimes slightly naïve, subjective and romantic. Like many critics remark, when reading, for example, Jacobs’ work about cities, you get the idea that it is impossible to live outside the city. This vision is naturally slightly exaggerated. Also in rural areas there are examples of social capital, entrepreneurship and creativity. Moreover, apart from the dynamics, many cities nowadays have more and more problems on the point of liveability and safety. Even worse, some people nowadays seem to flee from the bustle of the city and consciously choose to live in a quiet newly built neighbourhood or rural area. Furthermore, the unsystematic, inductive approach that Jacobs used sometimes raises questions. Take for example her most recent work *Dark Age Ahead* (2004): why would precisely the five pillars mentioned by Jacobs determine everything for Western civilization? Are other fundamental values like tolerance, care for nature and

trust in the politics not important? But at the same time: those who put up with this arbitrary approach of Jacobs discover a wealth of inspiring and relevant ideas in her work.

That the body of ideas of Jacobs' cuts ice can be seen in the practice of the everyday. In science, for example, interesting results are achieved with Jacobs' propagated method of "bio mimicry": of nature as a source of inspiration to get an overview of the workings of other systems. Within economic science, evolutionary economics is strongly on the rise. Also in exact subjects we see the application of the organic, evolutionary approach that Jacobs supported. Not only for scientists, but also for politicians her *œuvre* offers material to think about. Politicians struggle with issues in the field of city development and the working of the market every day. Jacobs said many meaningful things about these issues. For current municipal governors, her vision of city diversity is of crucial importance. In recent decades the easy way out was often chosen in city planning—with dullness and mono-functionality in urban areas as a result. Policy-makers who want to dedicate themselves to increasing city diversity can learn a lot from Jacobs. More and more municipalities in Europe use—whether or not consciously—her ideas successfully. For example, in the Dutch cities of Breda and Haarlem, investments have been made in living above shops, not just to realize more houses, but also to create "eyes on the street" and "social capital". Another example is the restructuring policy of former heavy industry areas like Sheffield (UK) and Essen in the German Ruhr area. Here, factory, industry and port areas are not simply destroyed; instead, adaptive reuse of these buildings occurs more and more as multi-company buildings, museums or living space. Apart from what Jacobs wrote about cities, her work on fundamental values was highly topical. Nowadays, we are witnesses of the possibility of clashes between the two moral systems Jacobs distinguishes in her *Systems of Survival* (1992). Tricky discussions about privatizing the national railroad system, the desirability of socially responsible enterprises and the question whether or not to introduce efficiency incentives at the police and in education indicate how delicate the relationship between public and private is. Let us hope that the blending of both systems will not lead to the "dark age" that Jacobs foresaw in her last work. According to her, it is important to always approach these kinds of fundamental societal issues with a creative and fresh view, an eye for the existing, and common sense. Therefore, the message of Jane Jacobs remains as effective as it is simple: go around the city, observe how the world works and look at reality in a new way!

Primary Bibliography

Someone who wants to get to know Jane Jacobs work usefully starts with her best known books, namely *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) and *Systems of Survival* (1992). The former is a model for her thinking about urban development, while the latter gives an impression of her ideas about values which are the foundation of economy and society.

Those who are interested in the other publications of Jacobs can go to the Jane Jacobs Archive of Boston College, which is connected to the University of Toronto. The archive includes manuscripts of her books, all kinds of research results, unpublished speeches, book reviews, magazine and newspaper articles, photos and some letters that Jacobs wrote to her family while on visits abroad. A part of that is published in the biography *Ideas that Matter: the Worlds of Jane Jacobs* (Owen Sound, The Ginger Press, 1997), under the editorship of Max Allen.