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Urban planning is an integral part of Singapore's identity and existence. However, less is known about the education of urban planners in Singapore – how it has evolved, how it has influenced practice over the years, and what are the challenges facing planning education presently and into the future. Why is this attempt to map the terrain of planning education worth researching and your time reading?

The well-trodden path to planning practice today is via a university degree in urban planning or close cousin disciplines of architecture, urban design, civil engineering, landscape architecture, real estate development and finance, geospatial analytics, geography, sociology, urban studies, economics, environmental psychology, environmental engineering, and more. In many countries, the only way to be professionally recognized as an urban planner is to graduate from an accredited program in planning coupled with several years of practice and passing a certification examination. Thus, planning practice is tightly intertwined with formal planning education and planning-related education in ways that influence the sticky existential question of our profession: "What is planning?" and "What qualifies an urban planner?"

More critically, in my interaction with young planners and aspiring planners-to-be, I hear time and again how they experience a professional crisis when they discover their university education in urban planning is inadequate to equip them with the skills necessary to land their first job. And for those who did get through the door, many find themselves disillusioned and not fulfilled: "Where do we apply that creative and visionary thinking to make cities better when most of our workday is coordinating meetings and writing meeting notes? Is there an education-job mismatch?" It begs the questions: Is the one to two-year master-level planning education inadequate to make practice-ready planners? Or more fundamentally, urban planning as a practice defies clear professional scope?

Ever so often when I meet foreign planners and educators who are somewhat familiar with Singapore, they would ask me: "Why is urban planning education in Singapore not more well-developed?" They expressed their puzzlement as they'd expected a well-planned city like Singapore to offer more and bigger urban planning programmes in the universities.

This volume's first contribution **Historical Snapshots of Planning Education in Singapore** shows us through archival research from multiple Saturday afternoons spent in the National Library Archives by Angela Teo and Cristina Nearing, that the history of urban planning in Singapore has been fraught with repeated birthing pains. History, if we would accept it as is, is a partial narrative with many gaps and silences. We hope this article will spin off a crowd-sourcing initiative to meaningfully fill the knowledge gaps of the evolution of planning education in Singapore.

The second contribution **Mapping the Contours of Planning Education in Singapore 2024** is an infographic report of findings from our survey research of how planners think about the relevance of their planning

education vis-a-vis their practice in 2024. The online survey ran for one month between January and February 2024, and we recruited a total of 51 participants via Singapore Institute of Planners website, social media, and other personal networks. It is our intention that this nascent project plants a seed of knowledge that could kickstart the collection of longitudinal insights about education-job dilemmas in time to come, which will be helpful to students, practitioners, and educators.

The process of putting this volume together is poignant. It challenged us to ask with practical purpose the existential questions about planning. This volume is also personally meaningful to me as a fellow urban planning sojourner whose journey is marked with several twists and turns.

We hope you find this volume engaging, productive, and inspiring for your work!

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