

“The best way to learn about your own city is to leave it. The second best way is to read *Common Ground in a Liquid City*.”

—David Tracey, author of *Guerilla Gardening: A Manual*

COMMON GROUND IN A LIQUID CITY

Essays in Defense of an Urban Future

••• by **Matt Hern** •••

If we want to preserve what's still left of the natural world, we need to stop using so much of it. And cities are the best chance we have left for a sustainable future ... but only if they remain vibrant, dynamic spaces that are unfolded by millions of people working together—and not by master plans and planners. What will it take to make our cities truly sustainable?

In a world where the flow of money and jobs and people is largely determined by the whims of global capital, Matt Hern's *Common Ground in a Liquid City* is a refreshingly down-to-earth look at the importance of place in the urban future. Using his own hometown of Vancouver—the poster city for “sustainable” urban development—as a foil, Matt travels around the globe in search of the elements that make our cities livable. Along the way, he pieces together a very different picture of urban renewal, one in which place regains its flavor and its funk, and cities become much more than bland investment opportunities.

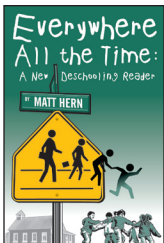
Engaging, accessible, and relentlessly original, *Common Ground in a Liquid City* is an appealing portrait of what the urban future might look like—if we can get our act together.

“It's an insightful and inspiring take on a city that's widely admired but little understood. Good to know there's hope for Vancouver yet. With more people like Matt Hern literally and figuratively taking down fences, we can build great places to live together.”—David Tracey, author of *Guerilla Gardening: A Manual*

“If you want to be a dweller, an inhabitant, a real citizen—not just a resident, a consumer of residence—if you want to begin to pay your ecological debts without leaving the city, this is the book you need to read. It is controversial. It will challenge you in a thousand ways ... for good.”—Gustavo Esteva, co-author of *Grassroots Postmodernism* and *Escaping Education*

“One of the best ways to experience your own city is through the travels that you take to other parts of the globe. Matt Hern's *Common Ground in a Liquid City* takes this idea to heart. It reads as a set of dispatches from abroad—a series of artfully engaging postcards in which he explores the nature (and foibles) of urban planning, public space, and civic process in Vancouver—all while wandering the highways and byways of some of the world's most vibrant urban centres.”—Andrew Pask, Director, Vancouver Public Space Network

Matt Hern lives and works in East Vancouver, where he is the director of the Purple Thistle Center. He holds a PhD in urban studies, lectures globally and teaches at the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. His books include *Field Day*, *Watch Yourself*, and *Everywhere All the Time*.

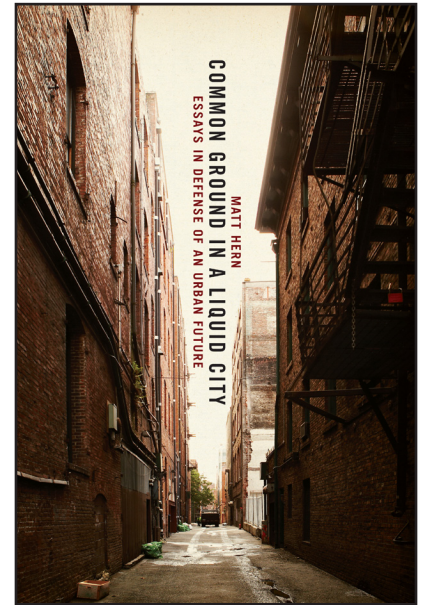


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