Scandinavian Journal of History

ISSN: 0346-8755 (Print) 1502-7716 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/shis20

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To cite this article: Tiina Männistö-Funk & Veera Moll (17 Mar 2026): Kids Vs Cars Courtyards as Contested Spaces of Inner-City Childhood in 1970s Helsinki, Scandinavian Journal of History, DOI: 10.1080/03468755.2026.2636310

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2026.2636310

Published online: 17 Mar 2026.

SCANDINAVIAN JOURNAL OF HISTORY
https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2026.2636310

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Kids Vs Cars
Courtyards as Contested Spaces of Inner-City Childhood in 1970s Helsinki

Tiina Männistö-Funk [a] and Veera Moll [b,c]

[a]Department of Finnish History, University of Turku, Turku, Finland; [b]Faculty of Built Environment, Tampere University, Tampere, Finland; [c]Department of Built Environment, Aalto University, Espoo, Finland

ABSTRACT

Post-war urbanization and the rapid growth of traffic had a transformative effect on the courtyards in inner-city Helsinki. Although not designed for play, courtyards had served as spaces where children could spend time and meet. The increased presence of both moving and parked cars in the yards, coupled with the scarcity of playgrounds elsewhere in the inner city, sparked intense debates in Helsinki during the 1970s. At the same time, initiatives were launched to enhance some of the courtyards according to ambitious plans. Despite these efforts, the transformation of courtyards into car-free, child-friendly areas proved to be a challenging task. Through an analysis of various sources, including reports, pamphlets, planning documents, guides, interviews and a range of articles addressing inner-city courtyards from six major newspapers, this article examines the debate surrounding children and inner-city courtyards. Studying the debates and efforts targeting the courtyards sheds new light on the history of play spaces that has often focused on playgrounds and newly built areas. It also offers a perspective on the changing concepts of children's spaces and needs in urban areas, the effects of motorization, the standardization of play and the interconnections of all three.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 28 July 2024
Revised 11 February 2026
Accepted 18 February 2026

KEYWORDS
Children; courtyards; Helsinki; motorization; parking

Introduction

'A little bit of willingness to co-operate and some independent initiative would suffice to transform the inner-city courtyards of Helsinki into pleasant play-areas for children and even for adults to spend time in' stated the tabloid newspaper *Ilta-Sanomat* in its 1968 article titled 'Give block courtyards to children'.[1] In Helsinki, courtyards constitute a larger share of inner-city surface-area than, for example, the streets surrounding them.[2] Taking into account their number and central location, they have received relatively little attention as urban space. In this article, we study the history of Helsinki's courtyards, especially concentrating on the time period from the late 1960s to the early 1980s when they were

CONTACT Veera Moll veera.moll@tuni.fi

topical. The discussion revolved especially around the conflict between the two main groups using and needing the courtyards: children and cars.

During this era, modernist planning and the rapid motorization of traffic changed urban environments drastically. A new interest towards living environments also drew attention to courtyards and children as neglected issues. In this article we ask: How were children and courtyards discussed jointly? What does the discussion tell us about the circumstances, aims and developments in the urban environment and what kinds of results did it lead to? From the point of view of courtyards, what role was attributed to children in shaping inner cities as built and lived environments?

We are interested in the inner-city courtyards as spaces produced by movements that link the courtyards to the wider system of urban spaces and systems of mobility. Here, we draw from the understanding of space in the so-called New Mobilities Paradigm that includes the idea of on-going everyday production of space by the movement (and immobility) of subjects and objects.[3] From the point of view of mobilities research, both systems of mobility and individual moving subjects shape spaces and are shaped themselves in a co-constitutive process.[4] Using the mobilities perspective widens the understanding of courtyards as connected spaces that were affected by changes in the surrounding urban space. Instead of seeing the courtyards as isolated, half-private islands in the sea of the public urban space, we will analyse how they were shaped in interaction with other spaces through systems of mobility. We draw especially from John Urry's concept 'system of automobility' that describes how automobility as the dominant system of mobility restructures time, space and social world.[5]

While Urry's concept has been widely used in both contemporary and historical research on mobilities, it has also been criticized for its extremely broad range as it attempts to cover all dimensions of automobility from economic and industrial to cultural and environmental, thus losing some aspects of critical sharpness.[6] The autopoietic nature of this all-encompassing system might also make us lose sight of the agency of people living their life in this system.[7] By focusing on courtyards and children we can contribute to understanding how the system of automobility was established locally, which actors had a role to play and what alternative outcomes might have been possible. Furthermore, our contribution highlights the parked cars as an important dimension in the system of automobility. As Karol Kurnicki has pointed out, the focus on cars as moving objects has meant overlooking parking, although it has had far-reaching consequences for the organization of cities and urban life.[8]

By inner city, we refer to Helsinki's oldest urban area that the city entirely constituted of until the 1946 annexation of surrounding areas. By the term inner-city courtyard, we refer to yards that were partially or completely enclosed by surrounding buildings, walls, or occasionally natural features such as rocks or trees and were typically paved with asphalt (see Figure 1). We focus on courtyards situated in two distinct inner-city neighbourhoods, featured repeatedly in the sources and representing two different types of areas: the mainly middle-class Kruununhaka and the working-class Kallio. Kruununhaka is one of Helsinki's oldest residential areas, and much of its building stock is from the 1890s–1920s. Kallio has more variety and was built from the early twentieth century on, parts of it under construction or redevelopment in the 1970s. Despite some socioeconomic differences among the residents, the courtyard life and physical characteristics of the courtyards in

Figure 1. A typical courtyard environment in the Kruununhaka district of Helsinki in 1986, showing one corner of the yard. Eeva Rista, Helsinki city museum. CC BY 4.0.

both neighbourhoods shared many commonalities. Both were layered architectural areas, not built according to any overarching grand plan. Both were discussed in the media from the perspective of opportunities for children's activities and both were also targeted in projects that aimed to make courtyards better during the era we are studying.

As sources, we have used a variety of materials produced by different actors: reports, pamphlets, planning documents and guides that included discussion on courtyards or targeted courtyards specifically; archival materials, photographs and interviews about courtyard-related activities of residents, activists and planning professionals, as well as a wide array of articles thematizing inner-city courtyards from six main newspapers.[9] We examined our multilayered research material using qualitative content analysis. Initially, we identified central and recurrent themes related to children and courtyards. These themes were then categorized and analysed through parallel and cross-readings. The analysis was further refined through collaborative discussion and interpretative reflection. Many of the sources were not just describing courtyards but actively aimed at shaping them. We examined them for information on how courtyards were experienced and used on the one hand, and for the characteristics and uses wished or striven for by different actors on the other. In all of the sources, the connection between children and courtyards is strong, but variations emerge, especially in the relationship of children and other user-groups and the amount of agency given to children themselves. The sources we used were produced by adults and mainly from adults' point of view, which leads us to mainly focus on the way in which adults thematized children's needs and presence in urban environments.

In the following section, we delve into the cultural-historical context of courtyards. After that, we explore discussions surrounding courtyards and children's changing role in urban settings. The subsequent chapter addresses the challenges posed by increasing

motor traffic, especially for children. We then examine the city's initiatives and the efforts of civic activists, both aimed at enhancing courtyards. Finally, we apply John Urry's concept of the system of automobility to analyse courtyards before presenting our key findings.

In the margins of the modern city

Most courtyards originating from the first half of the twentieth century in Helsinki can be characterized as inadvertent architecture. Their design contrasted with the apartment buildings and the surrounding city streets. Anna Maria Åstrom has described the courtyard as the opposite to the facade: a half-private space, lower in the architectural hierarchy. The staircases leading to it were mundane, in contrast with the stately staircases on the street side. It was a practical space, not representative or decorative.[10] The construction of inner-city courtyards was rarely driven by a deliberate architectural intent, and they were seldom planned as a cohesive unit.[11] Exceptions in the inner-city area are some cases where the existing block-structure was rearranged in order to form large open courtyards. One such courtyard was completed in Vallila area's block 555 in 1929 and designed from the beginning on as a communal garden.[12] However, in many cases the courtyards and the adjacent buildings were constructed over an extended period, following the regulations and architectural trends of each era. Consequently, the courtyards underwent a gradual transformation, as the buildings surrounding them transitioned from blocks of wooden houses to blocks of stone buildings.[13]

Courtyards were spaces in the margins although they existed in the very middle of the city. This marginality is reflected in research. The social significance of streets and other public spaces has received a lot of attention,[14] in a tradition inspired, for example, by Jane Jacobs' thoughts about the street, whereas such half-private spaces as courtyards and for example parking lots are far less studied.[15] Up until the 1960s, the marginal space accommodated marginal groups such as petty craftsmen offering services like sharpening knives and fixing pots, peddlers selling and buying things, and musicians who earned coins by wandering from courtyard to courtyard and performing for women working in their kitchens that had windows opening towards the courtyard.[16]

During the period we study, inner-city courtyards were utilized for household maintenance, including activities such as the cleansing of textiles, beating of rugs and the disposal of waste. In the preceding decades, they had also played an important role in the functions of the apartment buildings: they had been used for deliveries of coal and for storing firewood. They had also housed horse stables, outhouses, saunas and laundry rooms as well as different kinds of small industries and workshops.[17] For adults, the courtyards served primarily as passageways while taking care of household maintenance or other everyday duties (see Figure 2).

Studies on children's independent mobility have shown that courtyards often function as the first space where children are allowed to move independently and thus an important stepping stone in their development.[18] Courtyards have also been recognized as spaces belonging to the 'social infrastructure' of cities, helping to create social bonds and networks.[19]

Our findings likewise indicate that, despite the absence of intentional design for children's needs, children still played in the courtyards – primarily due to the lack

Figure 2. View of the fences separating several courtyards in the Kallio district in 1970. Simo Rista, Helsinki city museum.

of space in apartments and the courtyards' proximity to their homes. As courtyards were relatively protected and often surrounded by fences, even small children could be left alone there. According to memory history studies, courtyards served as thrilling and multifaceted playgrounds for many, yet were also domains that were frequently regulated by adults.[20] In addition, countless photographs of Helsinki depict children engaging in activities such as ball games, climbing, jumping, playing, and cycling within these courtyards.[21] Children both took over the margin space of yards and were marginalized by their need to make use of a space that was not meant for spending time in and was mostly used for taking care of things and activities that did not fit anywhere else.

Photographer Eeva Rista lived in Kruununhaka and, together with her spouse and photographer Simo Rista, documented the changing urban environment in Helsinki as well as activist interventions demanding improvements. Hundreds of their photographs show children playing in their own asphalted courtyard and in other similar yards among waste bins, parked cars and rugbeating racks, some of which are included throughout this article. Such experiences were wide-spread enough to become images reproduced in books, plays and films aimed at children. Playing in the courtyard was such a recognizable part of urban childhood that it could become a cultural trope. For example, in the popular and prize-winning picture book Jasonin kesä ('Jason's summer' 1976) by Camilla Mickwitz, the main character Jason is seen playing in a typically narrow, grey, and desolate courtyard next to waste bins[22] (see Figure 3).

Simo Laakkonen has studied Helsinki as children's environment from the 1920s until the 1950s through collected written memories. He describes the motorization of traffic as a clear break in the history of children and courtyards, happening after the 1950s: courtyards were turned into parking areas. For example, the snow that

Figure 3. Jason playing in his home yard on a bed that someone has disposed of. Camilla Mickwitz, *Jasonin kesä*. 1976.

had given children many possibilities for play in the courtyards had to be cleared away because of the cars. At the same time, the surrounding streets that until now had had relatively little motorized traffic became busy and dangerous with car traffic.[23]

Inner-city problems

From the mid-1960s until the early 1980s, the Finnish newspapers that we have studied used a largely shared discourse while writing about inner-city courtyards. They described the courtyards as dismal and dull squares of asphalt, separated from neighbouring courtyards of the block by walls or fences, both materially and socially hostile towards children who tried to play there. Adults driving children away from courtyards and other communal spaces was seen as a symptom of urban planning that did not leave space for children: 'We can ask where the children of the block now make their noise. Where do they now play their games? The adults' city has harshly pushed them away, to make space for cars'.[24]

In the case of Kallio, the discussion was clearly influenced by the Anglo-American slum discussion, although the situation in Helsinki was not comparable to the cities where the discussion had originated.[25] The working class district was seen as problematic and was also heavily redeveloped during the 1960s and 1970s.[26] However, courtyards could be referred to as slums, regardless of their specific location in the city, marking them as desolate and inhumane problem areas or signalling the general lack of pleasant environments in the inner city.[27]

The initial solution to address inadequate play environments, such as dark courtyards, was the creation of dedicated spaces for children's play, namely, built playgrounds. The first playgrounds in Helsinki were established in 1899, and the first supervised playground services were initiated in 1914.[28] The legislative requirement for planning child-specific

spaces was established with the enactment of the Town Planning Act[29] in 1931. This legislation obligated cities to provide public parks, spaces for play and sports for their citizens, thereby making playgrounds and sports fields integral components of urban planning, often incorporated within larger park complexes.

Much less attention was paid to residential yards. In 1959, Finland introduced its first national parking standards. Under the Building Decree of that year, the responsibility for providing parking shifted increasingly to individual plot owners. This led to designated car parking spaces being included in residential yards, often reducing the space available for children's play. To address this issue, legislation was later updated to require adequate playgrounds on the plots of new blocks of flats too, thus reinforcing the idea that yards were crucial spaces for children, especially the youngest ones. This happened however only in 1973,[30] and did not apply to the yards of the apartment buildings that had already been built – like the yards studied in this article. What is notable however is that the legislative change was accompanied not only by a surge in the construction of play spaces but also by a proliferation of studies, guidelines, and standards aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of children's built play spaces.

Earlier studies have suggested that the problem of urban children and the lack of child-friendly environments was not solved within the city centre but rather by creating completely new environments for families in the suburbs.[31] Indeed, the planning of suburban areas, initiated on a large scale in the 1950s, prioritized the needs of families with children. The foundational principle in suburban planning was to ensure reasonable walking distances between homes and schools, while also aiming to separate pedestrian pathways from motorized traffic.[32] Moreover, close to nature suburbs offered an abundance of unplanned natural places of play as well as built playgrounds and sports fields for children.[33] However, our analysis demonstrates that the inner-city courtyards were not entirely disregarded. The process of standardization and the subsequent discussions[34] concerning children's environments served as a catalyst for considering the needs of children within the city centre setting as well.

The courtyard life, described in the previous section, seemed to hold little value for twentieth-century experts, including garden city-oriented planning professionals, as well as medical doctors concerned about the worrying spread of tuberculosis.[35] As far back as the beginning of the twentieth century, the enclosed, dark, paved-over courtyards and city streets had come to symbolize inhumane and unhealthy urban environments, especially for the youngest children, and a broad consensus among different professionals emerged that children deserved something better.

Although courtyards never were placed at the very core of political discussion about urban planning, they featured also in this context. In the 1970 pamphlet book *Kenen Helsinki* ('Whose Helsinki'), two young architects criticized planning in Helsinki as only steered by the interests of motorization and big capital. They argued, for example, against turning inner-city residential flats into offices as it would fill the courtyards with the cars of the employees.[36] This was not a far-fetched scenario as inner-city residents owned significantly fewer cars than suburbanites: in 1970, some 46% of suburban households in Helsinki owned a car, but only 24% of the inner-city households.[37]

Private motorization had been at a low level in Finland until the early 1960s, but then started to increase rapidly.[38] The increase in car traffic was seen as an inevitable feature of urban environments, which also served as an argument for relocating families into new

residential areas.[39] Urry describes the 'unbundling' of the urban environment as a feature of the system of automobility, typically dividing workplaces from homes and creating a motorized commute between the split areas of different functions.[40] This development affected inner-city courtyards in two major ways: First of all, the division could not be carried out in the inner city in the same pure form as in the new residential areas. A large number of people continued to live in the inner-city areas, including many children, despite the suburbanization and the decrease in the total number of children in central Helsinki. For example, in 1979, children aged 0–14 made up 10.1% of the population in Kallio and 13.6% in our other case study area, Kruununhaka. These proportions remain relatively high compared to suburbs such as West Herttoniemi (14.1%) or Kontula (24%), which were specifically planned for families.[41] Second, the system of automobility increased both the inner-city residents' need to use a car and the number of cars entering the city from outside. Together, these two major factors made courtyards into contested spaces where the needs of children and the needs of cars clashed.

Cars or children?

In 1962, the Association of Finnish Cities, together with the Public Roads Administration and the Technical Trade Union, organized a traffic planning course for urban planners focusing on parking questions. *Helsingin Sanomat* reported about the course under the title 'Helsinki will be fully motorised in ten years' and described the difficulties of providing enough parking space in the city centre. On the one hand, the negative effect of cars taking over children's play space in the courtyards was noticed, but on the other hand courtyards were seen as especially suitable spaces for parking place construction.[42] Following the ideas presented, the Ministry of the Interior issued a committee with the task of defining new parking space regulations. The committee forecasted a situation where every second person would own a car, resulting in the norm of one parking spot for each apartment. Courtyards, as well as underground parking under the courtyards and houses were to provide half of this parking space in the future, whereas street-side parking, which at that time accounted for more than half of parking spots, was to diminish and cover only 5%, with parking areas and parking buildings planned to cover the remaining 45%.[43] Personal motorization was treated as a right and as an inevitable future development, which is visible in the way parking was prioritized in planning.

Alongside parking, traffic accidents were another acute question raised by the increase in motorization. The overall number of deadly traffic accidents rose every year from the end of the 1950s until the mid-1960s. It remained high for the rest of the 1960s and then reached an all-time record in 1972, causing worry at the top-most political level.[44] The share of child victims was large. For example, in the record year 1972, 30% of cyclists and 19% of pedestrians killed in accidents were under 14 years old.[45] Traffic safety work was concentrating on individual responsibility and alertness as solutions, also for children. However, towards the end of the 1960s the role of planning in traffic safety was beginning to gain more attention.[46] An important impact was made by the traffic separation guideline *SCAFT 1968*, developed in Sweden. The apparent impossibility of preventing accidents between children and cars through traffic education was a leading motivation for *SCAFT*: Traffic safety had to be achieved by physically separating motorized and non-motorized traffic, especially children and cars.[47] In practice, it was infeasible to carry out these

Figure 4. Children playing in the courtyard among the parked cars in the Kruununhaka district in 1973. Eeva Rista, Helsinki city museum.

principles in an already existing urban structure, without large-scale demolitions.[48] In the inner city, the only easily and safely accessible play-space for many children was the courtyard, now often used for residents' and commuters' car parking (see Figure 4).

Thus, two persistent problems of private motorization – parking and children – encountered each other and conflicted in the inner-city courtyards, making the space contested in a new way. 'Cars and laundry have their place in the stony yards, not children' wrote the national newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* in an emotional article about inner-city courtyards in 1966, describing how the yards were the only possible play spaces for small children, but a place for car parking was easier to find than a sand pit or a play area.[49] The following year the same newspaper further highlighted the inequality of children and cars: 'According to the regulations, every building needs to have at least ten square metres of children's play space for each apartment and 25 square metres of parking space. In practice, the cars usually take over the yards and children need to look for play areas elsewhere, often across busy streets'.[50]

In 1970 another article pleaded: 'On many courtyards, for example ball games or cycling have been banned, but car-parking is an established practice. The courtyards need to be taken back from cars, in order to create pleasant yards for all'.[51] The main Swedish language newspaper in Finland, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, referred to the same regulatory imbalance in an article titled 'Cars a more important factor than children' and pointed out that 'there is no guarantee that a courtyard, often the only place for children in the city block, is not totally transformed into parking spots'.[52] In another article, the newspaper pointed out that the city could afford to create enormous asphalted areas for parking, but not to give its children an environment that would fulfil even the minimum requirements for play space. In the courtyards filled with cars, the playing children were constantly in mortal danger but also constantly monitored by the car-owners who feared damage to their beloved vehicles.[53] The controversy of cars and children in the courtyards spearheaded other controversies around the use of city space: by contemporaries it was seen as illustrative of the way in which adults' needs were prioritized over children's needs in planning, but also of how the cars had overtaken space that should belong to people.

Car-centred planning began to receive increasing criticism towards the end of the 1960s. In Helsinki, this was marked especially by the foundation of the traffic policy association Enemmistö ('The Majority') in 1968. The association actively promoted the rights of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport and often commented on urban planning, thus putting traffic questions on the political agenda in a new way. Inner-city courtyards were an example of spaces that were asphalted and taken over by cars, affecting the overall quality of living environments. 'When did you last visit a courtyard without cars? Can you remember?' asked a cut-out postcard in Enemmistö's magazine, illustrated by a child holding a ball. Its flipside asked: 'Why are children not allowed to play freely in their courtyards?'[54]

Courtyards were not contested only in the capital city, but also elsewhere. Two young architects organized a car-critical exhibition in northern Oulu, and their criticism was published also in Helsinki by *Helsingin Sanomat*:

> Those who have lost their courtyards to the cars have lost a part of their home. Even the best housing standards do not substitute for the lost outside space, especially when traffic noise, dirt and the high cost of housing are the flavour of inner-city life.[. . .] We know that the courtyard is the only natural play area for children under seven years old. How many days, long days, must a child spend in this environment: waste bins, chain-link fences, concrete walls.[55]

Even though dramatic in tone, the description was not far from the truth. Newspaper articles lamented the lack of pleasant courtyards. One solution was seen in building a cover over the car parking and using it to provide play area, greenery and other functions.[56] Another common but much more ambitious solution proposed for the problem was the so-called block courtyard. This meant getting rid of the fences separating different yards inside the blocks and then developing the resulting large courtyard to contain different functions and areas.[57] These block courtyards were also seen as a remedy for the lack of play spaces in the inner city.[58]

City trying to reach its courtyards

Why don't we paint something more amusing in the yard instead of just white lines around the cars?

Why no games for children?

Why no decorations for adults?

Why no enjoyable views for the upstairs residents?

Why not bring cheer to the birds?

Why don't we add some colour for grandma?

Why don't we spread joy among people?[59]

The 1970s represented a significant shift in the development and planning of childhood environments,[60] but given that the new playground legislation primarily pertained to new constructions, its impact on pre-existing blocks and neighbourhoods was mostly indirect. Previous research suggests that the degree of attention given to child-friendly environments was lower in central Helsinki, compared to suburban areas.[61] However, the multitude of city reports, exhibitions, pamphlets, civic activism and newspaper

discussions we have uncovered attests to the rich discussions surrounding courtyards and block courtyards as children's spaces. Furthermore, there were ambitious initiatives and proposals to enhance child-friendliness, especially by establishing block courtyards. While post-war discussions on urban children frequently touted the suburbs as a remedy for the challenges faced by children, our source material from the 1970s takes a different approach. Instead of advocating for a relocation outside the urban core, the focus is on identifying solutions within the inner-city courtyards.

The poor state of the courtyards raised concerns among several actors. Residents' associations, local kindergartens and individual residents tried to improve the conditions of the courtyards in their own ways.[62] As demonstrated by the poetic quote from the City of Helsinki's report at the beginning of this chapter, the city was also concerned about the poor condition of the courtyards (see also Figure 5(a,b)). For instance, in response to the UN's Year of the Child initiative in 1979, the city commenced a comprehensive study of children's play opportunities within the urban environment. The final report, which spanned 350 pages, highlighted particular concerns about the inadequacy of inner-city courtyards. The study pointed out that the city centre had the city's worst areas for children. These lacked lawns, rocks, trees, bushes, landforms or play equipment, and were often filled with cars (see Figure 6). The city undertook several other studies, issued

(a)

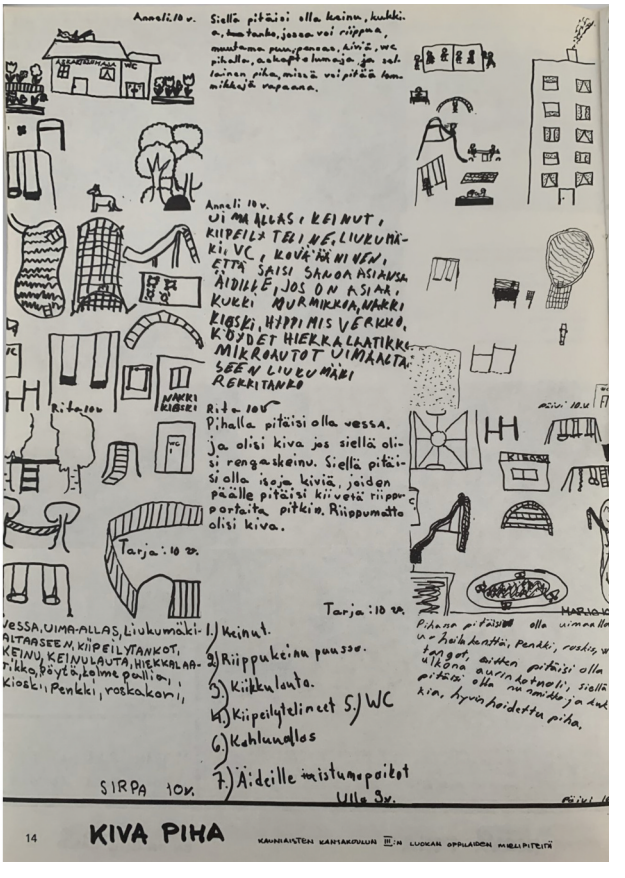

Figure 5. Children´s descriptions and drawings of nice ('kiva piha') and miserable yards ('kurja piha') in the publication for exhibition 'Meidän piha' ('our yard') that was organized by the city of Helsinki in 1973.

(b)

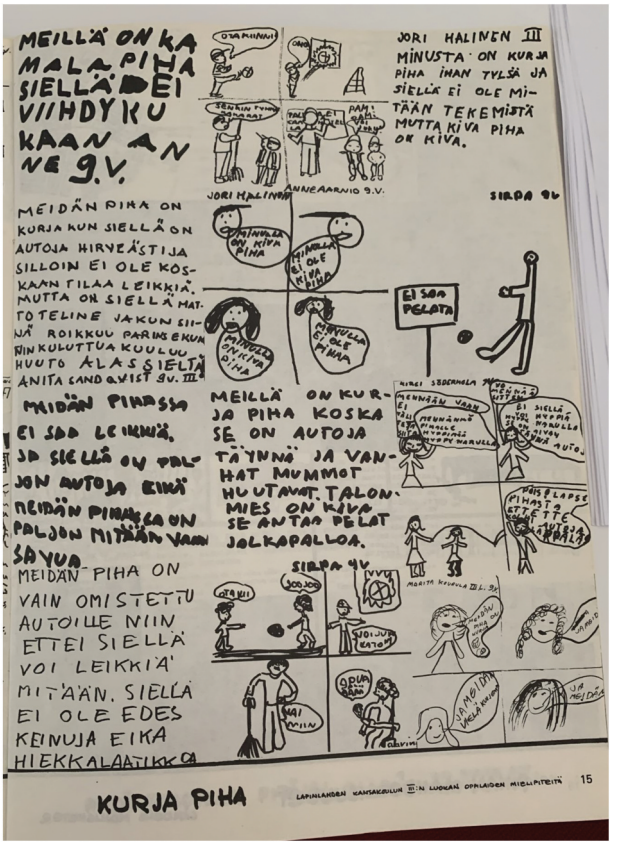

Figure 5. (Continue).

multiple reports and organized an exhibition titled 'Our Yard' (whose report was noted earlier) with the objective of enhancing the living standards of inner-city children and their courtyards.[63] However, the exhibition and most of the reports clearly conveyed that the residents and most importantly the housing companies had almost complete control over decisions regarding the use of the courtyard.[64] The city thus signalled that it had little means to directly change the situation of the yards but wanted to motivate the residents to take initiative.

Despite being generally recognized, the relationship between children and courtyards also remained precarious. *Helsingin Sanomat* interviewed children in Kallio about their play environments in 1980 and received pleas for more and better equipped spaces and a ban on cars. The article explained: 'It is not possible to play in the courtyards. Playing has been specifically forbidden, the courtyard is full of cars, or it is so small that there is no place there'.[65] In some separate cases throughout the 1970s residents succeeded in limiting the amount of parking and securing play space for children, sometimes through court decisions.[66] Overall, however, the situation in the courtyards seemed to change very little. Courtyards were not only contested but also neglected. Illustrative of this is a 1978 article in *Hufvudstadsbladet* that focused on an inner-city block that totally lacked greenery, due to its stony courtyards mainly serving as parking space. A female resident

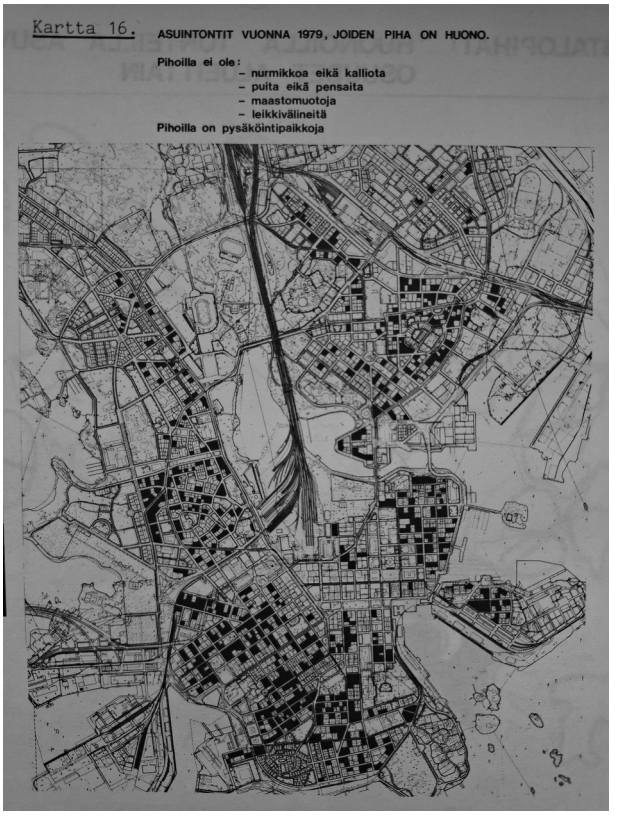

Figure 6. Residential areas in 1979 with poor yard quality, city of Helsinki 1982.

interviewed was depicted standing by her car in the yard, smiling. In the text, she was cited commenting how the yard was quite unpleasant but how this did not matter much as she had no children.[67] This resident's attitude was certainly not unique, although it went against the attitudes more generally highlighted in the newspaper articles. According to survey materials, the 1970s inner-city courtyards in Helsinki were not deemed as an important part of the living environment by most adult residents or were at least not utilized as such.[68]

The dream of a social yard

> Do you live in an apartment building situated within the enclosed blocks of the city centre? How do you feel about your courtyard? Do you enjoy spending time there or is it primarily utilised for taking out the waste? Is there a designated play area within your courtyard for young children? Are your older children able to meet their friends, engage in play, or fix their bicycles in the courtyard? Is your courtyard accessible for cars but restricted for children? Do you ever sit in your courtyard and have conversations with your neighbours?[69]

The most ambitious, tangible, and experimental proposals for improving the conditions of the courtyards were formulated by university and arts school students and teachers. In 1970, a research and planning programme, 'The Neighbourhood Project' was established as a joint project between the University of Technology and the Ateneum School of Arts. The programme was an extension of earlier courses held at the arts school, such as the basic course of general composition, which drew inspiration from the German Bauhaus art school. The primary aim of these courses was to educate students on social and environmental concerns and to motivate them to take action.[70] Targets for the projects were selected from various areas of the city. In this article, we focus on two cases: the block courtyard project in Kruununhaka district, known as *Villisika* block, and another one in Kallio, known as *Block 315*.

The Neighbourhood Project revolved around two main objectives. Firstly, the focal point was the removal of fences separating individual yards, thereby allowing the creation of expansive block courtyards. By establishing large courtyards, residents from different blocks would have the opportunity to co-operate and socialize with one another and exert influence on the development of their own neighbourhood. To ensure smooth co-operation among residents, the establishment of a Courtyard Council was necessary. Secondly, facilitating varied play for children was a crucial aspect of the plans, as indicated by the quote at the beginning. To achieve this, it was necessary to both build play equipment and remove a significant number of parked cars from the yards, if not all of them. The overall goal was to transform marginal and neglected urban space into a welcoming and sociable environment as a grassroot democratic exercise that would encourage and enable residents' positive influence in their living environment.

The *Villisika* block was a large residential complex that consisted of several housing companies with their own courtyards. The project was initiated by conducting a survey among the residents of *Villisika*. The survey aimed to gather information on how the residents utilized the yard and their preferences for its use. One question inquired whether the residents were interested in connecting the separate courtyards to create a larger block yard. It seems that the result was positive as residents formed a Courtyard Council. Moreover, both the teachers and students of the project contributed with ideas and instructions for enhancing the courtyards and worked with the residents to renovate them. As a result, some cars were permanently removed from the courtyards, plants were added, basements, saunas and play spaces were built or renovated. In addition, a puppet theatre was established, and parties were organized in one of the courtyards of the *Villisika* block. Interior architect Raimo Volanen, one of the project teachers, lived in the block and actively supported the project from an insider's point of view. Undoubtedly, his advocacy was important for the success of the project. The Council convened actively in the beginning of the 1970s but its activities dwindled after a few years. Volanen moved out of the block in 1974.[71]

Our other example, the *Block 315* plan in Kallio, was never realized, but a report *Kortteli kehittyy* (Developing Block) published in 1970 depicts in detail how this specific block could be developed.[72] Despite its partially utopian tone, the report had a significant impact and was referenced in both city reports and in the media. Raimo Volanen played a primary role in the report's publication.[73]

Like the *Villisika* block courtyard project, the goal of the *Block 315* plan was to encourage housing companies to remove the fences dividing different yards (see also Figure 2) and create a single, cohesive block courtyard that would be accessible to everyone. In the plan for *Block 315*, the yard would offer a range of facilities and services, including traditional

sandboxes, swings, a sports field and a barbecue area, as well as more experimental features such as a small plastic mountain 'for kids to climb and for mothers to sunbathe on'.[74] Ambitious services such as a theatre, block church, café, and clubs were also proposed, with the ultimate aim of creating a community with a variety of amenities within the city (see Figure 7(a,b)).

(a)

Figure 7. Block 315 in its current state, as well as a drawing depicting potential upgrades to the courtyard. The proposed upgrades include, for instance, the addition of a soccer field, an indoor play space, a puppet theatre and other amenities. The giant plastic hill is depicted in the lower right corner of the illustration. *Kehittyvä kortteli*.

(b)

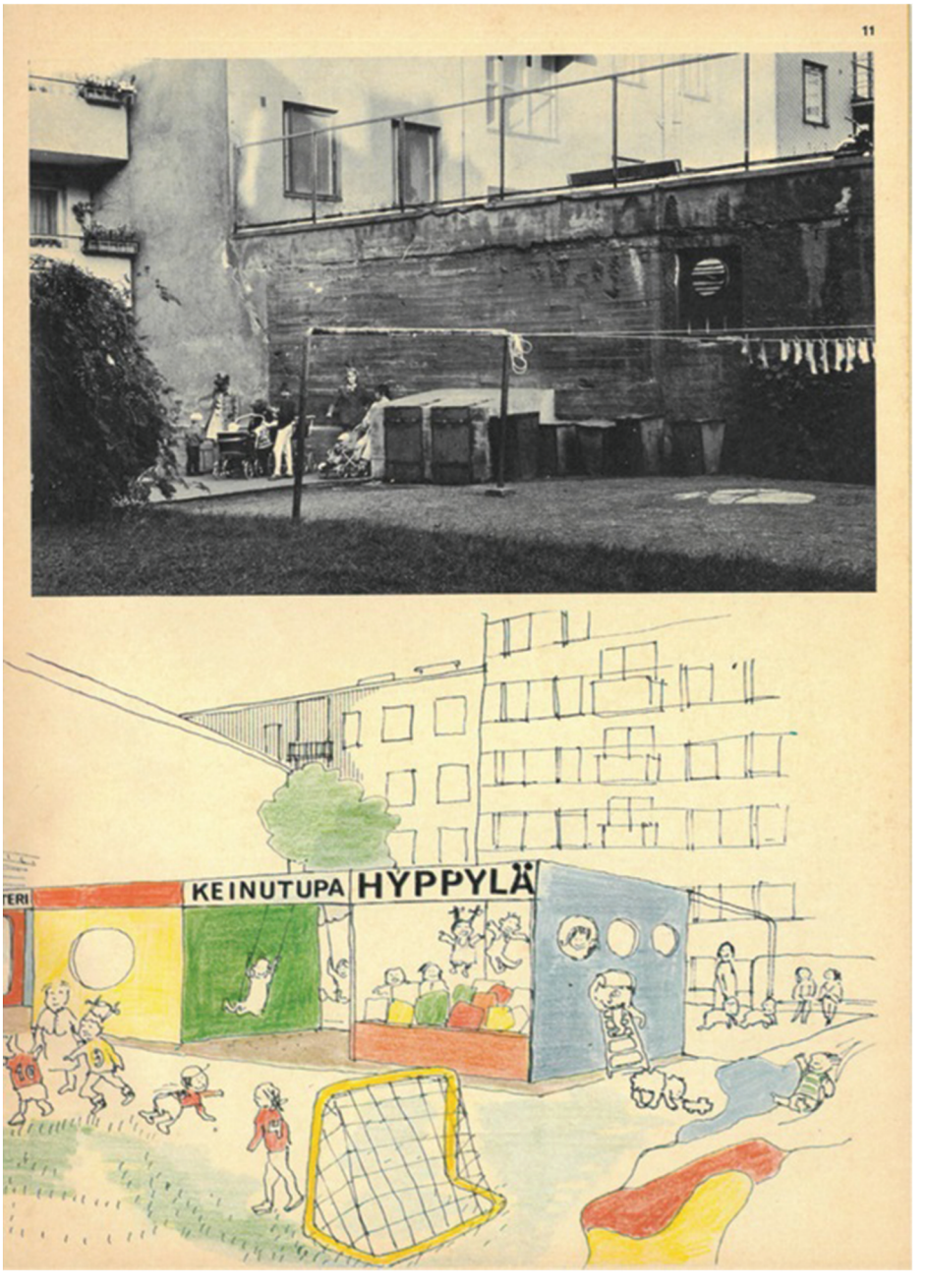

Figure 7. (Continue).

Helsingin Sanomat wrote about the plan for *Block 315* enthusiastically in 16 September 1969:

> Volanen's block is a real hub of activity. In the cellar spaces, there are slot machines, cafes, and small shops, among club activities for hobbies and interaction. In the outside fireplace a cosy fire is burning. By the fire, war veterans discuss their war memories, grandmas knit potholders, young boys float their ships in a small stream. The mothers of the block have suddenly become friends and chat comfortably while helping their youngest from the giant plastic hill. From the block discotheque, pleasant soul music can be heard[75]

Block 315 had a relatively large population of 1697 residents, of which 247 were under the age of 14 and 97 were over the age of 70.[76] Although the aim was to create a block courtyard that would cater to the needs of all residents in the surrounding buildings, the plans primarily prioritized the role of children. In addition to striving for a more welcoming urban setting, the objective was to improve social interaction among city dwellers and to increase safety. The courtyard was recognized as a possible remedy to the several hazards associated with urbanization, such as social problems, violence and seclusion. According to the authors, the establishment of block courtyards that foster a sense of community and an attractive ambiance could play a crucial role in promoting positive societal change.

The focus on the social aspects of the urban environment reflected the conversations surrounding suburbs. By the 1970s, growing criticism of suburban development had shifted the focus of planning from forest suburbs to more compact cities prioritizing social interaction among residents over proximity to nature.[77] Projects like *Villisika* and *Block 315* aimed at making inner-city courtyards into lived places for all or most inhabitants. What had been marginal and undesigned was now envisioned as central for social life and designed to fulfil this purpose and to invite the bodily mobility of all groups. However, many questions remained unsolved. Based on our research, we argue that a lot of initiative was needed from the residents' and housing companies' side.

To our knowledge, the city did not provide money or any other outside push or pull effects. Maybe most importantly the fact that yards were a non-place for most of the residents meant that there was no great interest in changing them. Those who had most interest were the users of the courtyards, children, and they could not act directly. Car owners' interest in continued parking possibilities probably played an important role as well. However, their role and point of view are notably missing from the discussions and official reports. This absence may indicate how deeply entrenched the system of automobility had become – so dominant that it no longer appeared as one interest group among others, but as an unquestioned, neutral norm.

The envisioned *Block 315* plans were never implemented. According to Volanen, one reason for this was the significant proportion of the block's inhabitants employed by the State Railways, working night shifts. They expressed concerns about the potential noise escalation emanating from the courtyard, which could disturb their nocturnal work schedules.

Although the projects *Villisika* and *Block 315* were short-lived, Raimo Volanen and other courtyard activists were able to significantly increase the discussion about the city's courtyards. Additionally, Volanen and his students made improvements in a few inner-city courtyards (see Figure 8(a,b,c)). Photographer Eeva Rista took the first image in a Kruununhaka courtyard in the 1970s before the related

(a)

(b)

Figure 8. Courtyard in Kruununhaka before the courtyard's renovation (1975); the opening party of the renovated courtyard (1977) and the courtyard in its current state (2022), Eeva Rista, Helsinki city museum & Eeva Rista's archive.

(c)

Figure 8. (Continue).

new courtyard plan and renovation, and the second photo after the renovation, during an opening party. Therefore, it can be concluded that even though most of the courtyards in the inner city have remained unchanged for decades, the activists from the 1970s were able to permanently make some yards more pleasant. This longevity of the successful resident efforts is illustrated by the third image taken by Eeva Rista in the same Kruununhaka courtyard in 2022.

Forgotten courtyards in the system of automobility

In 1981, the city of Helsinki conducted a large survey, asking the residents of the areas Kruununhaka, Kamppi, Kallio and Etu-Töölö about factors that affected the quality of their living environment most negatively. The top factors with negative consequences were traffic noise, dust, and the exhaust fumes of cars, and in Kallio also the problems caused by alcoholics and other 'asocial groups'.[78] Courtyards were also deemed a problem: 84% of the survey respondents were happy with their apartment, but courtyards were described as desolate and containing only asphalt, cars and waste bins. Only 15% of the respondents used to spend time in their yard but 70% supported the idea of creating block courtyards. Residents wished that their courtyards could have more greenery, play areas for children, tables and benches as well as other sorts of inviting facilities. Also other surveys and reports revealed that the situation of courtyards had not significantly improved since the 1960s. A report titled 'Turning Yards into Gardens: Monitoring Report of Inner-City Residential Apartment Building Yards 1979–1984', published by the City of Helsinki observed that the playgrounds and courtyards in the inner city were inadequate, contaminated, and hazardous. Likewise, the all-encompassing report 'Spaces of Play' released

by the City of Helsinki in 1982 revealed that both the courtyard playgrounds and those located outside of them were insufficient.

After all the courtyard discussion and initiatives of the 1970s, inner-city courtyards had not changed significantly, although many had been improved a little bit. The time period that we have studied in this article, reaching from the end of 1960s until the end of the 1970s appears as a special time era and a window of opportunity. Novel and even utopian solutions were presented to the old problem of dismal courtyards by societally active young architects. Inspiration for enhancing the courtyards was derived at least from other Nordic countries, notably Sweden. For example, Raimo Volanen and his colleagues conducted field trips there. Local activism of Stockholm's Vasastan neighbourhood, aimed at improving their immediate environment, was also portrayed positively in *Hufvudstadsbladet*.[79] Social visions were supported by the general spirit of societal activism and among planners also by the return to the city and to compact city ideas after the focus on garden cities and suburbs.

From the perspective of children, the endeavour to enhance their existing environments, rather than relocating them elsewhere to purpose-built playgrounds and suburbs as previously done, was also revolutionary. The growing attention to children in courtyards can be linked to the increasing criticism of suburbs, with some suggesting that they had failed to fulfil their promises, even regarding the well-being of children.[80] Moreover, the growing interest in courtyards from children's perspective pertained to the evolving role of children in the urban environment. Alongside the call for protection and the provision of, for instance, playgrounds, there was a growing discourse surrounding the opportunity and right of children to actively participate in the urban community and environment, instead of marginalizing childhood into designated spaces.[81] However, the momentum of planning for children's greater wellbeing only carried on into the 1980s if it became institutionalized, as was the case in building playgrounds and daycare facilities. Existing inner-city courtyards were left outside this standardization of childhood spaces.

Improving the yards was a challenging task and the city's endeavours were constrained to conducting research, identifying challenges, and disseminating information, without implementing substantive measures to tackle the issues. The responsibility of addressing these challenges primarily fell upon the residents, apartment owners, and, most importantly, housing companies, which were often, but not always, reluctant to undertake such efforts due to rising costs, effort, or disinterest. From the mobilities point of view, a central factor was the difference in ownership and legislation between the courtyards and the streets. While the city had the authority to regulate streets and other public spaces, it had far less control over existing courtyards, as the new legislation of 1970s concerning children's play spaces applied only to new construction. In the system of automobility this discrepancy became a problem as the mobility needs and practices did not define themselves along the lines of ownership and governance. David Gogishvili has observed a similar but later development in Georgian capital Tbilisi, where the post-soviet privatization of housing stock has given car-owners the possibility to transform courtyards from leisure space to parking areas.[82]

In our case, turning a blind eye on the courtyards was easy for many residents. For them, courtyards were spaces holding some useful things, such as cars and waste bins, but they did not become places actively created by the residents' movement in the space. In contrast, children's continuous and repeated use of the very same courtyards made

them significant places for them and potentially for adults near them. This difference was further deepened through the newly motorized system of mobility. John Urry has argued that the system of automobility led to a restructuring of space that in a self-expanding manner increasingly revolved around cars.[83] As our source material clearly demonstrates, in this system, courtyards became spaces serving car-mobility by making space for the inherent immobility: the parking.

Transforming the inner-city space to serve the system of automobility not only restricted the mobility of children as a group outside cars and car-ownership, it also shaped all the spaces available to them by reorganizing the mobilities and immobilities that gave the spaces meaning. This was observed by some of the specialists commenting upon childrens' needs in the early 1980s. Whereas children had earlier moved around freely, they now stayed in the courtyards.[84] In *Hufvudstadsbladet*, a child ombudsman commented in 1984:

> We have agreed upon some criteria and are not willing to change those, for example that the traffic should run smoothly and everything should be as efficient and sterile as possible. But if children and their safety were to receive the same priority that the car has in traffic today, the environment would improve for everyone.[85]

This observation is very much in line with what we have seen happening in the courtyards: It was commonly known and acknowledged that the creation of better environments for children would necessitate restrictions in car traffic. Despite this consensus, decisive actions were not undertaken to limit the mobility of cars. Instead, the mobility of children was restricted. It is possible that the diminishing new generations, alongside the growing affluence that enabled more spacious housing for most families, made the question of children in urban space less pressing. Still, the main obstacle of change seems to be located in the system of automobility that meanwhile had become normalized.

As Urry has demonstrated, car-centred planning had created locked-in institutional processes that were almost impossible to reverse.[86] Especially the argument for efficiency of motorized traffic seemed difficult to counteract in this system as it was based on technocratic planning on one side and private car ownership on the other. Our study illustrates how the question of parking, its regulation and organization form the key issue when considering the effect motorized traffic has in urban areas, especially on children. Furthermore, we have found out that grass root social initiatives to improve urban environments were still possible in the highly dominant system of automobility and possibly could have gained much wider influence with some more concrete support from city's side.

Conclusions

Contrary to what earlier studies have indicated, the efforts to provide children with better and safer environments were not restricted to suburban areas, although the newly introduced legislation only concerned newly built housing units. Our study has demonstrated that ambitious courtyard plans were made, and also partially carried out, in Helsinki. Additionally, many courtyards were improved a little, leaving them greener

and equipped with some sort of a playground area, even if modest (see Figure 8(a,b,c)). We discovered that children were the group most often mentioned when the need for improvements in courtyards or their desolate state was discussed. Children appeared as the main group of people using the courtyards and needing them. The discussion reveals the way in which the space of children in the city became increasingly contested and also regulated during the large-scale increase in motorization.

The push to improve courtyards in the 1970s was motivated by at least three factors. First, the gradually evolving perception of childhood began to influence planning ideals and reshaped adults' understanding of what constituted adequate play spaces for children. There was a growing belief in children requiring environments that were versatile, stimulating, and safe. Secondly, the desire to transform courtyards, which had previously been marginal and neglected spaces, into social spaces, can be linked to broader changes in the paradigm of (sub)urban planning discussions that increasingly emphasized the importance of social connections between urban residents. Thirdly and perhaps most importantly, the increasing interest in courtyards as children's spaces was due to the dramatic increase in motorized traffic, which not only made courtyards unpleasant and constricted but also hazardous for children at the same time as it restricted children's ability to use other urban spaces for roaming and play.

Despite the efforts, transforming courtyards into car-free, child-friendly areas proved to be a challenging task. Improving courtyards was encouraged by the city, but mainly in the form of reports and surveys, which rarely led to concrete action. Consequently, many courtyards remained as they were – and are still today – uninviting asphalted backyards dedicated to car-parking. Our study on the joint discussion on children and courtyards highlights parking as a major part of the system of automobility with direct consequences in lives of urban children. The study has also revealed the central role of semi-private spaces as enablers of the system. We have demonstrated that the problem of diminished space for children was recognized and discussed actively. However, in most cases there was not enough communal tradition or motivation for using the courtyards for anything more than storage. This highlights the need for active planning and regulations to counteract the negative spatial effects of automobility on every level.

Modern, institutionalized and standardized childhood has been subject to criticism due to the segregation of children into their own isolated spaces, such as kindergartens, schools and playgrounds.[87] The inner-city courtyards, which were not subject to the 1970s play environment regulations, offer an intriguing opportunity to examine the consequences of not regulating and standardizing childhood environments. In some instances, housing co-operatives limited parking space and designated areas for children's play, as seen in Figure 8(a,b,c), representing the best-case scenario. In the majority of cases, however, the dominant feature of the courtyards – the immobility of motorized traffic – claimed most of the space, forcing children to search for play areas in the midst of cars and elsewhere in the city.

In the suburbs, with the help of newly established standards and regulations, a compromise between accommodating children and prioritizing vehicular traffic was achievable. Although the standards can often be seen as a supporter of the system of automobility, adding to the complex relationship of automobility and urban planning, they can also serve as a mirror that shows us what was deemed important or problematic enough to be standardized. In the inner city, the absence of regulations for children's play

spaces within courtyards led to cars exerting dominance over the available area, triumphing over children in the contest for courtyard spaces.

Today, inner-city courtyards are topical in Helsinki again – and again the development of block courtyards is desired. At the end of 2022, the city published a web guide encouraging residents of apartment buildings and the housing companies to jointly develop their courtyards, giving many reasons why greener yards with space for different activities are worth striving for.[88] The guide has been produced in co-operation with the residents' movement 'Korttelipihat takaisin!' (Bring back block courtyards!) and refers to urban planner Mikko Mansikka's 2006 book 'Pihoja ihmisille' (Courtyards for people). The book calls for a return of green oases into the 'gloomy deserted asphalt yards' of the city.[89] Such rhetorics and the calls for resident initiative resemble in many ways the discussion and projects around inner-city yards that took place in Helsinki some 50 years earlier, revealing how little the material situation of courtyards has changed during the decades in between.

Notes

1. "Korttelipiha lapsille," *Ilta-Sanomat*, 2 March 1968.
2. Ilonen, "Slummeja vai keitaita," 52. Ilonen estimates that Helsinki has some 2000 inner-city courtyards.
3. Sheller, "From Spatial Turn".
4. Sheller, "New Mobilities Paradigm," 782.
5. Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," 25–39.
6. Sayre, "The Humanity of the Car," 126–7.
7. Goodwin, "Reconstructing Automobility".
8. Kurnicki, "What Do Cars Do".
9. *Helsingin Sanomat, Ilta-Sanomat, Uusi Suomi, Hufvudstadsbladet, Suomen Sosiaalidemokraatti, Etelä-Suomen Sanomat.*
10. Kolbe and Åström, *Helsingin historia vuodesta 1945*, 63–6.
11. Exception are the courtyards in the area of Töölö that were designed after Danish models. See Saarikangas, "Edustuksellisuutta ja yksityisyyttä," 122.
12. Nikula, "Old and new Vallila".
13. Ilonen, "Slummeja vai keitaita," 52.
14. See, for example: Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht, *Sidewalks: Conflict and Negotiation.*
15. Jane Jacobs criticized the idea that children should be kept in the safety of courtyards and not be allowed to use the streets as part of her criticism towards the garden city idea. Jacobs, *The Death and Life*, 35–6, 79–83.
16. Laakkonen, "Asphalt Kids," 308; Kolbe and Åström, *Helsingin historia vuodesta 1945*, 63–6.
17. Laakkonen, "Asphalt Kids," 307–8.
18. Kyttä, "Children's Independent Mobility"; Horelli, "Children's Autonomous Mobility," 452–3.
19. Gogishvili, "Competing for Space in Tbilisi," 378; Prytherch, "Reimagining the Physical/social Infrastructure," 692.
20. Laakkonen, "Asphalt Kids," 307–9; Moll and Kuusi, "From City Streets".
21. Rista, Rista, and Savia, *Asfalttia ja auringonkukkia.*
22. Mickwitz, *Jasonin kesä*, 4–6; See other examples of similar courtyards in children's culture that also commented upon the courtyard as contested space: "Prisbelönt kortfilmartio önskar sig nio liv," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 20 May 1971; "Ros till skolteatern," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 30 May 1977; "Puunuket heräsivät eloon," *Uusi Suomi*, 17 October 1980.
23. Laakkonen, "Asphalt Kids," 309.

24. Kyösti Reunanen, "Kivitalokortteleiden pihat saataisiin viihtyisiksi paikoiksi myös lapsille," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 16 September 1969.
25. See, for example: "Kallion kasvot muuttuvat," *Uusi Suomi*, 21 November 1960; "Kaupunkiemme suunnittelu," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 14 April 1963.
26. Mäkelä, *Uudistuva Kallio*.
27. See, for example: "Kallion kasvot muuttuvat," *Uusi Suomi*, 21 November 1960; "Kaupunkiemme suunnittelu," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 14 April 1963.
28. Jouhki, "Politics in Play".
29. Town Planning Act.
30. The Decree on the Amendment of Building Decree, according to which adequate space for playgrounds had to be allocated also in the grounds of apartment buildings.
31. Moll, "Standardizing Play"; Moll and Kuusi, "From City Streets"; Lilius, "Is There Room for Families".
32. Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia*; Meurman, *Asemakaavaoppi*.
33. Saarikangas, Moll, and Hannikainen, "Lived, Material and Planned Welfare".
34. *Principles of Planning the Living Environment*; Sauro, *Mitä lapsi tarvitsee asumisessa.*
35. Waenerberg, "Pro memoria"; Moll and Kuusi, "From City Streets".
36. Helander and Sundman, *Kenen Helsinki*, 107.
37. Raimo Markkanen, "Numerosalaattia Helsingin kantakaupungin Väestöstä," *Uusi Suomi*, 5 November 1970.
38. In the mid-1950s, only every 50th Finn owned a car, but already by the mid-1960s every 10th had a car, and by the mid-1970s every fifth. "Statistics Finland, Number of Vehicles Registered by Year, Vehicle and Information".
39. Moll and Kuusi, "From City Streets".
40. Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," 28.
41. *Leikin ympäristö*, 170, 204, 276, 288.
42. "Helsinki täysin autoistunut kymmenen vuoden kuluttua," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 27 November 1962; See also the course material: "Liikennetekniikka II: Pysäköintikysymykset".
43. Hankonen, *Lähiöt ja tehokkuuden yhteiskunta*, 303–7.
44. Masonen, "Liikenneturvallisuus ja ympäristö," 233–6.
45. Koivurova, "Suojattoman liikenteen turvaamistoimenpiteet," 117. Together with the elderly, children accounted for half of the pedestrian fatalities: In 31% of the pedestrian deaths, the victim was over 65 years old.
46. Männistö-Funk, "The Struggle over Pedestrians".
47. Lundin, *Bilsamhället. Ideologi, expertis och regelskapande*, 210–11.
48. Hagson, *Stads-och Trafikplaneringens Paradigm*, 159.
49. "Autoille ja pyykeille tilaa, ei lapsille kivisellä pihalla," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 10 August 1966.
50. "Lasten leikkipaikat," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 23 October 1967.
51. Leena Maunula, "Me emme anna pois tapahtumapuistoamme," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 30 May 1970.
52. Annika, "Bilar viktigare faktor än barnen," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 13 September 1967.
53. Ole Falck, "Stadsbarnens försummade utemiljö," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 10 July 1968.
54. "Milloin viimeksi kävit pihalla jolla ei ollut autoja? Muistatko?," *Enemmistö*-magazine 5/1972.
55. "Asfaltti peittää kaupungin kun insinööri määrää," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 28 March 1975.
56. "'Kannellinen' Pihamaa Keskustan Asuintaloon," *Uusi Suomi*, 15 March 1969; "Autolle sija kotinurkilta viihtyvyyttä häiritsemättä," *Ilta-Sanomat*, 11 November 1979.
57. See: "Korttelipiha lapsille," *Ilta-Sanomat*, 2 March 1968; "Asfalttipihoista viihtyisiä leikki- ja oleskelutiloja," *Uusi Suomi*, 5 December 1968; Leena Maunula, "Me emme anna pois tapahtumapuistoamme," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 30 May 1970; Raimo Markkanen, "Helsinki kohentaa keskusta-asumista," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 30 May 1970.
58. "Tutkimus Helsingistä: Lasten leikkipaikoissa vielä suuria puutteita," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 27 May 1983.
59. *Meidän Piha*. Translation by the authors.

60. Discussions about an urban environment suitable for children took place throughout the twentieth century, and spaces dedicated to children, such as daycare centres, schools and playgrounds, were built at an increasing rate. See: Moll, "Standardizing play".
61. Lilius, "Is There Room for Families".
62. Some examples were, for example, the Vironniemi kindergarten and the Kruununhaka residents' association, both very active in the questions of urban environment. See: "Vironniemen päiväkodin toimintasuunnitelma 1983–1984".
63. For example, the following reports: *Meidän piha*; *Pihoista puutarhoja: Kantakaupungin asuinkerrostalopihojen seurantaraportti*; *Kruununhaan, Kampin ja Etu-Töölön asukkaiden mielipiteet*; *Leikin Ympäristö*.
64. *Meidän piha*, 1.
65. "Helsingin lapset kysyvät: Ovatko pysäköintipaikat tärkeämpiä kuin me?," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 28 March 1980.
66. "Föräldraskrivelse räddade 'barnoas'," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 26 May 1973; "Upprepat nämnden ej till P-plats på gård," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 1 December 1978.
67. Ann-Gerd Steinby, "Lärkan – kvarter utan grönska," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 18 June 1978.
68. Saarikangas, "Edustuksellisuutta ja yksityisyyttä," 122.
69. Volanen, *Kortteli kehittyy*.
70. https://www.aalto.fi/fi/aalto-yliopiston-arkisto/radikaalia-sommittelua-kaj-franckin-peruskurssi. Accessed 26 July 2024.
71. Volanen, "First Interview About the Courtyard Project"; Volanen, "Second Interview About the Courtyard Project".
72. Ibid.
73. Volanen, *Kortteli kehittyy*. Other professionals, including architects, a lawyer, and a journalist, also contributed to the report.
74. Volanen, *Kortteli kehittyy*, 8.
75. Kyösti Reunanen. "Kivitalokortteleiden pihat saataisiin viihtyisiksi paikoiksi myös lapsille," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 16 September 1969.
76. Volanen, *Kortteli kehittyy*, 8.
77. Saarikangas, Moll, and Hannikainen, "Lived, Material and Planned Welfare".
78. "Pihojen ankeus painostaa helsinkiläisiä – liikennemelu ja humalaiset suurimmat häiriöntuojat," *Helsingin Sanomat*, 11 December 1981.
79. Ole Falck, "Kvartenrgårdens förutsättning finns men initiativen saknas," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 3 January 1971.
80. Moll and Kuusi, "From City Streets".
81. See for example: Ward, *The Child in the City*.
82. Gogishvili, "Competing for Space".
83. Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," 27.
84. Syvänen, "Lähdetäänkö elinympäristön suunnittelussa ihmisen".
85. "Anpassa miljön till barnen – Så mår vi alla bättre," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 27 May 1984.
86. Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," 32.
87. Zeiher, "Children's Islands in Space and Time".
88. "Guide to Creating Block Courtyards".
89. Mansikka, *Pihoja Ihmisille*, 10.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the two reviewers for their insightful comments on the manuscript, and to the colleagues who provided valuable feedback during its preparation.

Minor language refinement was assisted by Microsoft Copilot during the final stages of preparing the manuscript.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The work was supported by Alli Paasikivi Foundation, City of Helsinki and Research Council of Finland (grant numbers 363010 and 341029).

Notes on contributors

Tiina Männistö-Funk is an Academy of Finland research fellow at the department of Finnish history, University of Turku, Finland. Her five-year research project funded by the Research Council of Finland, The Majority without a Motor, studies the history of Finnish living environments from the perspective of spatial equality and non-motorised mobility. She has published widely on the history of everyday materialities, urban space and gender.

Veera Moll (D.Sc.) works as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Faculty of Built Environment at the Transport Research Centre Verne, Tampere University, Finland. Her research focuses on children in urban planning, with a special emphasis on children's mobility and play in urban contexts. She has authored several articles on the urban history of children, exploring it both from a planning perspective and through the lens of children's experiences.

ORCID

Tiina Männistö-Funk http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7709-3642
Veera Moll http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7441-5071

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