

Acknowledgments

This book brings forward ideas that have been in my mind for a while. My thoughts received a significant push when reading Marten Scheffer's book, *Critical Transitions in Nature and Society* (2009) after I happened upon the book in 2010 in the back of Reiter's bookstore in Washington, DC. I had become interested in how, when, and why social–ecological–technological systems change and the transformations that result across the urban landscape. As my thinking advanced, I began to recognize that such transformations often come with stress, crisis, and moments of transition. Another component of this awareness was that, once resolved, these tumults are often largely forgotten and woven into the complex fabric of cities. The ambition of the book is help reveal and unearth what these past trials can tell us about how to best respond to the climate crisis that cities are now facing today.

I have made this intellectual journey into past urban environmental crises and transformations with a lot of help from others including from my family, friends, and colleagues and from my visits to cities near and far, old and new, big and small, and wealthy and not. The writing of the book took place during brief moments in between other responsibilities and over extended periods with more time to put pen to paper. A special thanks goes to Hunter College for the support during my sabbatical year in 2022 to really finish the work. I would also like to thank the folks at Cambridge University Press and Matt Lloyd specifically, who let me blow by some deadlines for the book while staying enthusiastic about the work and supportive of the effort. Extra special thanks go to Joy Cytryn, who did amazing work with book's graphics as well as providing other research and editorial support, and to Charlie Overton, who provided additional editorial review.

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I would like to dedicate the book to Daniel Solecki and Helen Solecki. They are part of a next generation of people who are starting to take over the reins of the social–environmental problems that threaten this fragile world. I hope the book provides them with some additional knowledge on how to reconcile humanity’s relationship with the earth, solve some of the pressing issues that climate change put in front of us, and advance sustainable and equitable life in our cities.

