

# **Solidarity by Design**

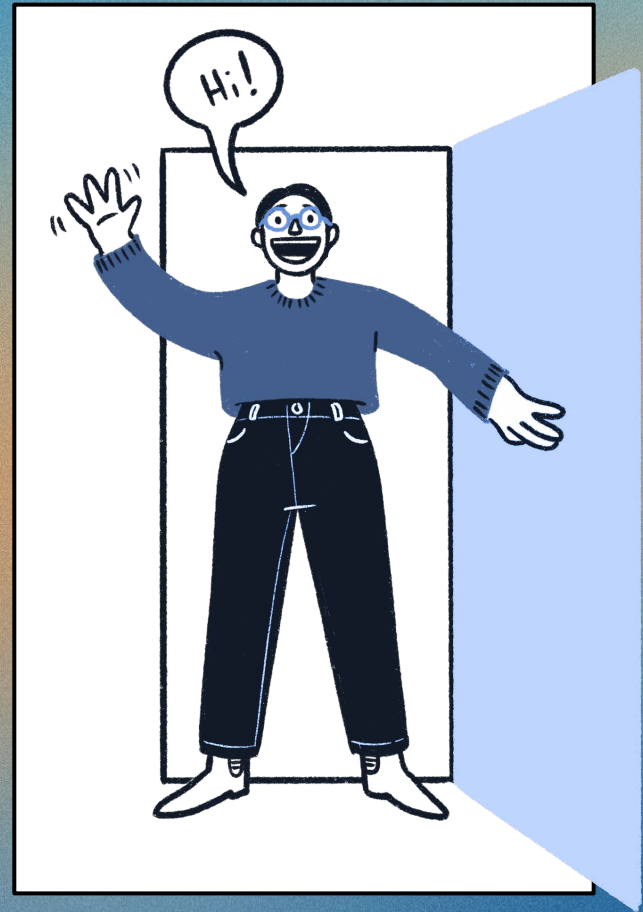
**Participatory design and  
movement lawyering**

**Hallie Jay Pope | Director, NJ Legal Design Lab  
UVic Legal Design Series | February 12, 2025**

# Hi, I'm Hallie Jay Pope!

I'm a legal educator,  
advocate, and  
information designer.

Questions? Email me!  
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**“Design is about problem-solving,  
and ultimately, not all of us are  
trying to solve the same problems.”**

Pope, “Designing to Dismantle,” in *Design in Legal Education* (Allbon & Perry-Kessarlis, eds.)

# What is the problem?

The system is flawed but  
capable of producing just  
outcomes

The system is designed to  
produce and maintain  
unjust outcomes



**Reform** existing system to  
eliminate flaws

**Dismantle** existing system  
and create something new

# What is the role of lawyers?

“Grappling with power, whether one is fighting against it or trying to build it, almost always involves encounters with the legal system. And the legal system itself is a site of contestation and class struggle. Lawyers are a part of that legal system, no matter which side of the fight we are on.”

Marika Diaz, *Paradox and Possibility*

# **What is the role of lawyers?**

**Lawyers must shift our institutional power to people organizing themselves for liberation.**

# Movement lawyering

“By supporting and advancing the building and exercise of collective power, led by the most directly impacted, movement lawyering can contribute to systemic institutional and cultural change.”

Scott Cummings, *Movement Lawyering*

# How do we do movement lawyering?



# What is the NJ Legal Design Lab?

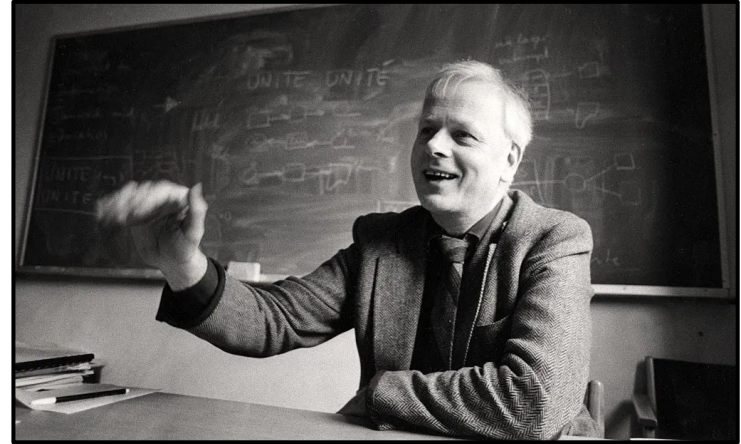
The New Jersey Legal Design Lab is a social change laboratory at Seton Hall Law School's Housing Justice Project. We combine law, design, and education to channel power into local movements for housing justice.



# Traditions informing our work



**Liberatory pedagogy**  
Highlander Folk School, bell hooks



**Scandinavian participatory design**  
Kristen Nygaard

# **Lessons learned from liberatory pedagogy and Scandinavian PD**

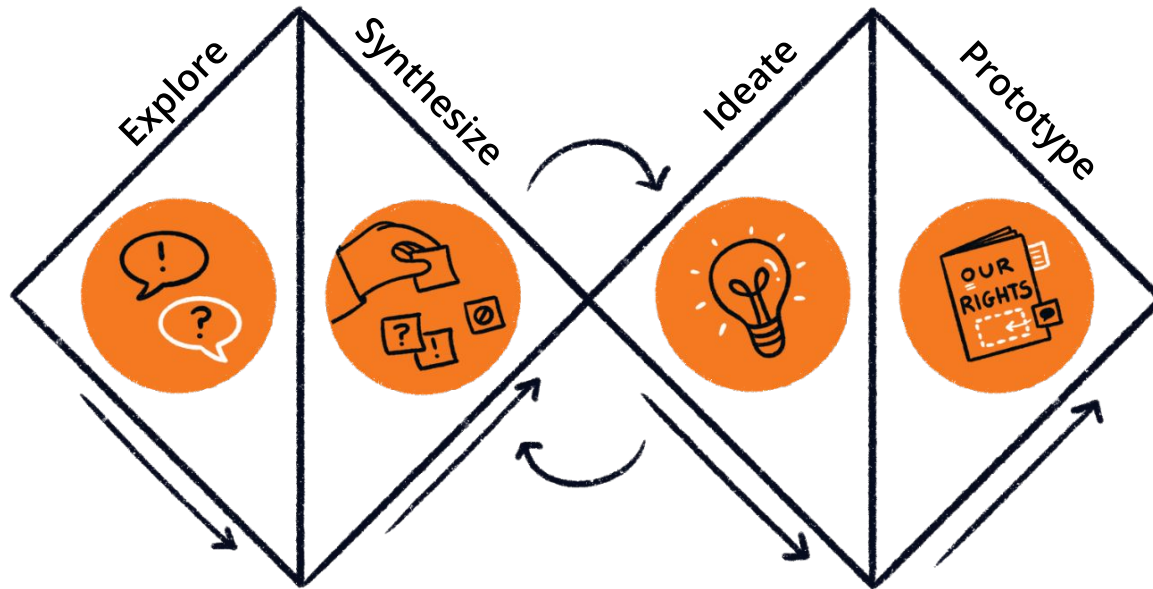
- 1. Treat classroom as community, and community as classroom**
- 2. Facilitate experiences and storytelling of individual and collective agency**
- 3. Embed political values**
- 4. Nurture joy and radical imagination**

# **One example: co-designing resources with Newark tenant organizers**

In August 2024, the Housing Justice and Legal Design Clinic began a collaboration with Homes for All Newark, a tenant-led housing justice organization.



Define the problem



Get feedback and iterate

**Design process**



*Clinic students, community partners, and Lab staff map assumptions about project stakeholders*

# Defining

Our partners joined us in class and shared why they wanted us to support their organizing efforts. We mapped out our assumptions about other stakeholders based on their institutional power and solidarity.



*Clinic students attended a film screening and discussion about a local tenant association's fight to save their home.*

# Discovery

To learn more about tenants' and organizers needs, students observed events like town council meetings, trainings, Co-Lab meetings, and talks, and spoke with a range of housing advocates and organizers.

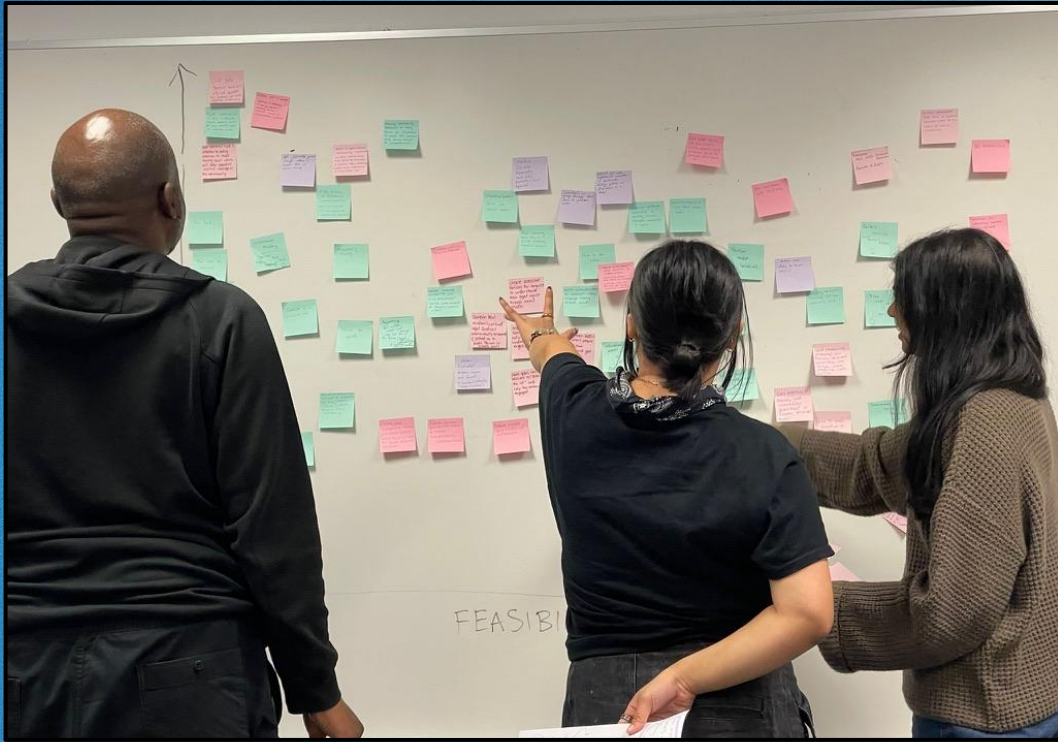
Discovery Insights Synthesis Map - 10/17/24



# Synthesis

Students and community partners from HFAN went through multiple rounds of synthesis to explore themes from our discovery activities.

Clinic students and community partners used affinity mapping to identify common themes across discovery opportunities.



*Co-Lab members joined students and community partners to generate and prioritize ideas for solutions (Photo by Abdul Rehman Khan.)*

# Ideation

Tenants, organizers, and students asked “How Might We” questions based on our insights, and then generated and prioritized early ideas for solutions.



*The documentation tool team brainstorms together.*

# Prototyping

This semester, we broke into teams to design two prototypes: a tenant resource hub and a documentation and assessment tool. Three Co-Lab members joined student teams as Core Designers.



*Co-Lab members give the tenant resource hub team feedback on their first paper prototype.*

# Feedback

Last night, clinic teams presented their first paper prototypes to Co-Lab members for feedback. In two weeks, they will seek feedback from tenants throughout the city.



*Inaugural Co-Lab members celebrate after our first meeting.*

# Iteration

This semester, design teams will create three versions of their prototypes. Beyond that, we will continue to explore the problem and further develop solutions with the Co-Lab and future clinic students.

# **To what extent have we been able to:**

- 1. Treat classroom as community, and community as classroom?**
- 2. Facilitate experiences and storytelling of individual and collective agency?**
- 3. Embed political values?**
- 4. Nurture joy and radical imagination?**



*Our current Lab staff: Daniel Joseph Wiley, Hallie Jay Pope, and Abdul Rehman Khan.*

# Iteration (on the Lab!)

In the past few months we have:  
hired an organizer to lead our community engagement,  
initiated the Core Designer program,  
and combined the Co-Lab and clinic.

# **What does *design* give us beyond *organizing* or *strategizing*?**

Explicitly creative frameworks stretch what game designer Mary Flanagan calls our “attention to possibility.”

**“If we design, create, and agitate with the goal of dismantling (and not merely reforming) elite rule, our attention to possibility must stretch to include that which most deem *impossible*.”**

Pope, *Solidarity by Design* (LDR 2023)

# Thank you!

Questions? Email *[hallie.pope@shu.edu](mailto:hallie.pope@shu.edu)*!