SO355-15 The Sociology of Urban Life

20/21

Department
> Sociology

Level
> Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader
> Carrie Benjamin

Credit value
> 15

Module duration
> 10 weeks

Assessment
> 100% coursework

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module will discuss critical theoretical and empirical perspectives on urban studies. Cities provide important contexts for thinking about the relationships between social processes and spatial forms, as dynamic sites of social inequalities, complex social relations, and socioeconomic change. Globalisation, neoliberalism and immigration are all big social processes affecting and shaping cities and their residents' everyday lives.

Module aims

Through in-depth readings and lectures, the module will explore theoretical and empirical perspectives on the contemporary city, related to global cities and mega-cities as well as smaller cities, social exclusion and difference, community and social relations in the city, gentrification and urban transformation, urban poverty and public space. We will also explore these perspectives and issues with reference to a range of international empirical examples.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Introduction: World cities, global cities

Week 2: The modern city and its discontents
Week 3: The right to the city
Week 4: Ghettos, enclaves, and marginality
Week 5: Public space
Week 6: UG Reading week; PGT excursion: Psychogeography and walking the city
Week 7: Gentrification and displacement
Week 8: Divided cities
Week 9: Mixed cities
Week 10: Urban uprisings and social movements

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- (1) To demonstrate advanced understanding of key perspectives and issues on the sociology of cities and urban life, and the ability to link theory with practice in social research.(2) To develop students' research skills in urban studies, including desk-based research and cultural analysis. (3) To develop students' ability to work independently and critically on urban research projects.

Indicative reading list

Anjaria, Jonathan Shapiro. 2009. 'Guardians of the Bourgeois City: Citizenship, Public Space, and Middle-Class Activism in Mumbai'. City & Community 8(4):391–406.
Atkinson, Rowland. 2006. 'Padding the Bunker: Strategies of Middle-Class Disaffiliation and Colonisation in the City'. Urban Studies 43(4):819–32.
Bacqué, Marie-Hélène and Yankel Fijalkow. 2012. 'Social Mix as the Aim of a Controlled Gentrification Process: The Example of the Goutte d'Or District in Paris'. in Mixed communities: gentrification by stealth?, edited by G. Bridge, T. Butler, and L. Lees. Bristol: Policy Press.
Boal, Frederick W. (2002). 'Belfast: Walls Within.' Political Geography, 21(5), 687– 694.
Bollens, Scott A. (1998). 'Urban Planning Amidst Ethnic Conflict: Jerusalem and Johannesburg.' Urban Studies, 35(4), 729–750.
Bridge, Gary, Tim Butler, and Loretta Lees, eds. 2012. Mixed Communities: Gentrification by Stealth? Bristol: Policy Press.
Cadogan, Garnette. 2016. 'Walking While Black'. Literary Hub. Retrieved 8 April 2019 (https://lithub.com/walking-while-black/).
Caldeira, Teresa P.R. (1999) 'Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation.' In Setha M. Low (ed), Theorizing the City: The New Urban Anthropology Reader. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pp. 83–110.
Davis, Mike. 1992. 'Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space'. Pp. 154–80 in Variations on a theme park: the new American city and the end of public space, edited by M. Sorkin. New York: Hill and Wang.
Elkin, Lauren. 2017. Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Fainstein, Susan S. (2005). 'Cities and Diversity: Should We Want It? Can We Plan For It?' Urban Affairs Review, 41(1), 3–19.
Harvey, David. 2008. 'The Right to the City'. New Left Review 53:23–40.

Heynen, Nik et al. 2018. Revolting New York: How 400 Years of Riot, Rebellion, Uprising, and Revolution Shaped a City. edited by N. Smith and D. Mitchell. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Hou, Jeffrey. 2010. '(Not) Your Everyday Public Space'. Pp. 1–18 in Insurgent public space: guerrilla urbanism and the remaking of contemporary cities, edited by J. Hou. New York: Routledge.

Hubbard, Phil (2016). 'Hipsters on the High Street: Consuming the Gentrification Frontier,' Sociological Research Online, 21(3). http://www.socresonline.org.uk/21/3/1.html

Keith, Michael. 2005. After the Cosmopolitan? Multicultural Cities and the Future of Racism. London: Routledge.

Kilibarda, Konstantin. 2011. 'Clearing Space: An Anatomy of Urban Renewal, Social Cleansing and Everyday Life in a Belgrade Mahala'. Cambridge Review of International Affairs 24(4):593–612.

Lees, Loretta. 2008. 'Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance?' Urban Studies 45(12):2449–70.

Lees, Loretta, Hyun Bang Shin, and Ernesto López ¬Morales (2016). Planetary Gentrification, London: Polity Press, pp. 83–110.

Lefebvre, Henri. 1995. 'The Right to the City'. In E. Kofman and E. Lebas (eds), Writings on Cities. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 63–181.

Loopmans, Maarten P. J., Pascal de Decker, and Chris Kesteloot. 2010. 'Social Mix and Passive Revolution. A Neo-Gramscian Analysis of the Social Mix Rhetoric in Flanders, Belgium'. Housing Studies 25(2):181–200.

Low, Setha M. 2006. 'The Erosion of Public Space and the Public Realm: Paranoia, Surveillance and Privatization in New York City'. City & Society 18(1):43–49.

Low, Setha. 2009. 'Maintaining Whiteness: The Fear of Others and Niceness'. Transforming Anthropology 17(2):79–92.

Marcuse, Peter. 1985. 'Gentrification, Abandonment, and Displacement: Connections, Causes, and Policy Responses in New York City'. Urban Law Annual: Journal of Urban and Contemporary Law 28(1):195–240.

Mah, Alice (2010). 'Memory, Uncertainty and Industrial Ruination: Walker Riverside, Newcastle upon Tyne.' International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 34(2), 398–413.

Massey, Doreen. 2006. 'London Inside-Out'. Soundings 62–71. https://www.lwbooks.co.uk/sites/default/files/s32_06massey.pdf

Mayer, Margit. 2016. 'Neoliberal Urbanism and Uprisings Across Europe'. Pp. 57–92 in Urban Uprisings: Challenging Neoliberal Urbanism in Europe, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology, edited by M. Mayer, C. Thörn, and H. Thörn. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.Millington, Nate (2013). 'Post-Industrial Imaginaries: Nature, Representation and Ruin in Detroit, Michigan.' International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 37(1), 279–296.

Mitchell, Don (2003). The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space. New York: Guilford Press, pp. 1–13 (Introduction). Suggested reading:

Nayak, Anoop (2006). 'Displaced Masculinities: Chavs, Youth and Class in the Post¬Industrial City.' Sociology 40(5), 813–831.

Sassen, Saskia. 2005. 'The Global City: Introducing a Concept'. Brown Journal of World Affairs 11:27–43. http://www.saskiasassen.com/pdfs/publications/the-global-city-brown.pdf

Shaw, Kate S. and Iris W. Hagemans. 2015. '"Gentrification without Displacement" and the Consequent Loss of Place: The Effects of Class Transition on Low-Income Residents of Secure Housing in Gentrifying Areas'. International Journal of Urban & Regional Research 39(2):323–41.

Sinclair, Ian (2002). London Orbital: A Walk around the M25. London: Penguin.

Slater, Tom. 2006. 'The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research'. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 30(4):737–57.

Slater, Tom. 2009. 'Missing Marcuse: On Gentrification and Displacement'. City 13(2–3):292–311.

Slater, Tom. 2011. 'From "Criminality" to Marginality: Rioting Against a Broken State'. Human Geography 4(3).

Stehle, Maria. 2006. 'Narrating the Ghetto, Narrating Europe: From Berlin, Kreuzberg to the Banlieues of Paris'. Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture 3(3):48–70.

Tissot, Sylvie. 2011. 'Of Dogs and Men: The Making of Spatial Boundaries in a Gentrifying Neighborhood'. City & Community 10(3):265–84.

Wacquant, Loïc. 2008. 'Relocating Gentrification: The Working Class, Science and the State in Recent Urban Research'. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 32(1):198–205.

Zukin, Sharon. 2010. Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zukin, Sharon, Philip Kasinitz, and Xiangming Chen (2015) 'Spaces of Everyday Diversity: The Patchwork Ecosystem of Local Shopping Streets.' In Sharon Zukin, Philip Kasinitz and Xiangming Chen (eds), Global Cities, Local Streets: Everyday Diversity from New York to Shanghai. London: Routledge, pp. 1–28.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

UG students will conduct a small-scale urban ethnography research project on public transportation. Based on "bus ride activity" in Coventry or another urban centre. To be submitted in written form, 500-words on top of included route map.

Subject specific skills

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6 on the FHEQ:
students who have demonstrated:
a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
conceptual understanding that enables the student:

- ○ to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
- ○ to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

Transferable skills

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects

critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem

communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

And holders will have:

the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- ○ the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- ○ decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- ○ the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Reading for seminars.
Preparation for seminars
Research and outside reading/viewing for reflection paper
Preparation and writing of reflection paper
Preparation and writing of summative work

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Reflective Paper (500 words)	15%	

Short reflection paper on the role of the city or the depiction of urban life in a film, song, poem, story, or other creative or artistic work, to be submitted in written form. 500-words, excluding appendices (images, excerpts, etc)

Written Assignment (2500 words)	85%	

Assessed 2500-word critical and theoretical essay (85%)

Feedback on assessment

Marking is via the Tabula system and students receive written, electronic feedback through the system.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 3 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Optional for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 3 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 3 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 3 of L301 Sociology
- Year 4 of USOA-L306 BA in Sociology (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
  - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
  - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)

This module is Option list A for:

- ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)

- - Year 4 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)