

SOCG 214 • Urban Sociology • Isaac Martin
Spring 2017 • Tuesdays, 8 to 10:50 AM • SSB 101
Office hours Tues & Weds 2-4 • iwmartin@ucsd.edu

“The city is the highest, most complex form of human social life.”
—Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society*, 1887

“Society has been completely urbanized.”
—Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 1970

There is a sense in which all sociology is urban sociology. The university is a creature of urban civilization, and academic sociology was born in a handful of metropolitan universities in societies that were undergoing especially rapid urbanization. Many classics of sociological theory were penned by newcomers to the big city, and can be understood as efforts to discern a pattern underlying the apparently chaotic interaction among strangers in the modern metropolis.

What we now think of as urban sociology proper, however, began in the effort to delineate which of these patterns in the lifeways of city dwellers occur *by virtue of their being city dwellers*. Early urban sociologists studied the social consequences of metropolitan living by comparing city life explicitly or implicitly to life in traditional agrarian village societies. They often had a particular preoccupation with those aspects of city life that seemed to pose new problems—how rural migrants from far-flung villages, whose languages and lifeways were mutually unintelligible, might adjust to living near each other; how city dwellers could hope to stay safe among so many strangers; how the poorest of the urban poor survived without work, land, or kin—and their scholarship had a melioristic, even moralistic edge. The great analytic and methodological challenge of urban sociology was distinguishing among those problematic social phenomena that represented the effects of the city on its inhabitants, those that represented the effects of rural-to-urban migration, and those that just happened to be characteristic of the sort of person who would choose to move to the city.

In the late twentieth century, urban sociology began to face a new challenge: the village societies that had provided its methodological and analytical foil were disappearing. Today urban living is the global norm, and even rural places produce for and depend on large urban markets. The urbanization of most of the world’s population has made it increasingly difficult to distinguish between lifeways that are characteristic of the city and those that are characteristic of society in general. What purpose is left for a specialized urban sociology in a world that is, as Henri Lefebvre put it, “completely urbanized”? Some critics have suggested that “urban sociology” is a pleonasm like “the sociology of society”; better, perhaps, just to call it sociology and be done.

Instead of contrasting cities with pre-urban village life, sociologists today generally study urban lifeways by examining the contrast between city and suburb, or contrasts among different cities, or among neighborhoods *within* a city. Is this still urban sociology? Or is it the sociology of space, the sociology of housing, the sociology of settlements, or something else? Regardless of how we understand its theoretical boundaries, the field that we still call “urban sociology” retains many of the preoccupations, and some of the foibles, of its classics; and there is much we can learn from studying these classics alongside contemporary contributions to the field.

EXPECTATIONS

I expect you to keep up with the class reading and show up ready to discuss it. The reading is heavier in some weeks than others.

Every week after week one, by 5 PM before the day of our class meeting, you should e-mail a *critical question* on the assigned reading. A critical question should point us to a *particular* passage in an assigned text; *briefly* explain why that passage is important to the text; and pose a question about it for discussion. In other words, this is not a big written memo, and you should not think of this as a burdensome writing requirement. The purposes of this assignment are (1) to nudge you to get some of the reading done before the last minute, and (2) to give me information about what people are interested in discussing, so that I can plan our agenda and we can use our time to maximum advantage.

You can skip critical questions twice without consequence for your final grade. (I will lower the final grade by a third of a grade point for every three critical questions you skip, so with the third, it will start to affect your letter grade.)

If you think that urban sociology is a field in which you might do dissertation research, you should read around beyond the syllabus, in order to familiarize yourself with the field as it is currently practiced. In addition to the specific recommended readings listed here, I recommend browsing recent issues of *AJS* and *ASR*, along with *City and Community*, which is the journal of the community and urban sociology section of the American Sociological Association, to get a feel for what the live debates are and what a good article looks like. The other journals listed on this syllabus are also good to browse. Because urban sociology overlaps considerably with the kindred fields of geography, planning, and politics, and because many universities have entire departments and even colleges devoted to city planning, there are dozens of other excellent journals for urban sociologists to publish in, some of them with greater circulation and greater scholarly impact than even the top general interest journals in sociology. As an urbanist, you will never run out of interesting scholarly debates to join.

A FINAL PAPER

If you enroll, I *require* you to write a final research paper of no more than 20 pages, addressing a research question that I have approved beforehand. I am aware that ten weeks is a very short time to complete a research paper that requires original data collection. For this reason I encourage papers that analyze secondary data. I particularly encourage replication of a published study as an excellent way to learn the craft of sociology. If you are short of ideas come talk to me early.

I will also accept final papers that take the form of a proposal with a crisply delineated research question, an explanation of why the answer to that question is a contribution to the literature, and a clear and feasible plan for data collection and analysis that would answer the question.

You may apply to me for permission to write a theoretical literature review paper in lieu of the research paper if you are *currently* preparing for a field examination in urban sociology.

RECOMMENDED READING

One way to get up to speed quickly on the field is to read agenda-setting literature review articles. Here are some recent ones that are worth reading:

Hunter, Marcus Anthony and Zandria F. Robinson. 2016. "The Sociology of Urban Black America." *Annual Review of Sociology* 42: 385-405.

Logan, John R. 2012. "Making a Place for Space: Spatial Thinking in Social Science." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 507-24.

Pattillo, Mary. 2013. "Housing: Commodity versus Right." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39: 509-31.

I have also listed recommended further reading under particular topic headings in our schedule. They include sources that I think are of interest because they are either especially new, especially good, especially interesting for thinking through the issues at hand, or especially important, though not necessarily all four. They are listed in no particular order, and they are provided for your future reference; I have not gone to the trouble to track down hyperlinks for these, and I do not assume that you will read them during the quarter. I have put an asterisk (*) by certain of these recommended readings that are classic studies that I think any specialist in the field will want to be familiar with, even though they are not required for this course: these probably belong on a field exam list.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND REQUIRED READING

The following is the outline of our course. Where a required reading must be purchased, I have indicated it with a dollar sign (\$).

Week 1 THE URBAN AS A PROBLEM

A historic flood of rural people into European and American cities in the late nineteenth century brought social and cultural diversity vividly to the attention of urban intellectuals. Social theorists of that era, including many founders of the discipline of sociology, struggled to understand whether the unfamiliar lifeways they now saw around them were effects of city living, or effects of rural-to-urban migration, or merely characteristic of the cultures that migrants brought with them. We will begin with a classic statement of the problem by W. E. B. DuBois, which is also, arguably, the founding document of American urban sociology.

Required:

DuBois, W. E. B. 1967 [1899]. *The Philadelphia Negro*. New York: Schocken. Chapters 1-7, 9, 11, and 14-16.

Further reading:

- Tönnies, Ferdinand. 1957 [1887]. *Community and Society*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Logan, John R. and Benjamin Bellman. 2016. "Before *The Philadelphia Negro: Residential Segregation in a Nineteenth-Century Northern City*." *Social Science History* 40 (4): 683-706.
- Muhammad, Kahlil Gibran. 2011. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Week 2 HUMAN ECOLOGY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

For at least a century sociologists have conducted empirical research in the city to investigate whether (and, if so, how) different patterns of settlement on the land affect our collective ability to form and sustain social networks, norms, and trust. Because of its focus on competition for territory, this research program has been called human ecology. We will read a classic statement, an influential theoretical alternative, and a recent case study.

Required:

- Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* 4(1): 1-24.
- Fischer, Claude. 1995. "The Subcultural Theory of Urbanism: A Twentieth-Year Assessment." *American Journal of Sociology* 101, no. 3 (November): 543-77.
- § Ghaziani, Amin. 2015. *There Goes the Gayborhood?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Further reading:

- * Simmel, Georg. 1950 [1905]. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." Pp. 409-24 in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Ed. by Kurt H. Wolff. New York: The Free Press.
 - * Park, Robert E., Ernest W. Burgess, and Roderick D. McKenzie. 1967 [1925]. *The City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 - * Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gans, Herbert. 1962. *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans*. New York: Free Press.

Week 3. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF URBANISM

Patterns of settlement on the land may be affected by the institution of private property in land; by the existence of markets for land, labor, and capital; and by various political arrangements for regulating markets and distributing resources through non-market channels—in short, by political economy. In the 1970s, this insight led many Marxian and Marxist scholars to suggest that what Wirth misrecognized as "urbanism" was merely capitalism, or at most a specifically capitalist form of urbanism, or maybe, even more specifically, a twentieth-century American liberal capitalist form of urbanism. We will consider the status of these critiques in the twenty-first century.

Required reading:

- Molotch, Harvey. 1976. "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place." *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (2): 309-332.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2009. "Cities Today: A New Frontier for Major Developments." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 626 (1): 53-71.
- McCabe, Brian. 2013. "Are Homeowners Better Citizens? Homeownership and Community Participation in the United States." *Social Forces* 91 (3): 929-954.
- Nicholls, Walter J. 2008. "The Urban Question Revisited: The Importance of Cities for Social Movements." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32(4): 841-859.

Further reading:

- Scott, Allen J. and Michael Storper. 2015. "The Nature of Cities: The Scope and Limits of Urban Theory." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39 (1): 1-15.
- Becher, Debbie. 2014. *Private Property and Public Power: Eminent Domain in Philadelphia*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pacewicz, Josh. 2016. "The City as a Fiscal Derivative: Financialization, Urban Development, and the Politics of Earmarking." *City and Community* 15 (3): 264-288.

WEEK 4. WHY PEOPLE MOVE

Many classic works of urban sociology focused on residential mobility as one of the most important social processes in the city. At the individual level, mobility was thought to be a mechanism by which people found their place, both literally and figuratively, in the modern status order. At the neighborhood level, the rate of mobility was thought to be an index—or perhaps a cause—of disorder. But why do people move, and what are the effects of residential mobility on individual life chances? We will consider recent research that illustrates a variety of methodological and theoretical answers to these questions.

Required reading:

- South, Scott J., Ying Huang, Amy Spring and Kyle Crowder. 2016. "Neighborhood Attainment over the Adult Life Course." *American Sociological Review* 81 (6): 1276-1304.
- Carrillo, Laura, Mary Pattillo, Erin Hardy and Dolores Acevedo-Garcia. 2016. "Housing Decisions among Low-Income Hispanic Households in Chicago." *Cityscape* 16(2): 109-150.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2012. "Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty." *American Journal of Sociology* 118 (1): 88-133.
- Rugh, Jacob and Matthew Hall. 2016. "Deporting the American Dream: Immigration Enforcement and Latino Foreclosures." *Sociological Science* 3: 1053-1076.

Further reading:

- Martin, Isaac William and Christopher Niedt. 2015. *Foreclosed America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Massoglia, Michael, Glenn Firebaugh and Cody Warner. 2013. "Racial Variation in the Effect of Incarceration on Neighborhood Attainment." *American Sociological Review* 78 (1): 142-165.

WEEK 5. CIVIL AND UNCIVIL ENCOUNTERS

Because cities are settlements comprised of strangers, people who live in cities cannot count on personal bonds of affection and trust to maintain civil behavior. How, then, is civility maintained in cities? How do we explain variation in urban incivility—whether among encounters, among neighborhoods, or over time? Under what conditions does urban incivility lead to violence?

Required reading:

O'Brien, Daniel Tumminelli, Robert J. Sampson, and Christopher Winship. 2015. "Econometrics in the Age of Big Data: Measuring and Assessing 'Broken Windows' Using Large-Scale Administrative Records." *Sociological Methodology* 45 (1): 101-147.

Lee, Jennifer. 2002. "From Civil Relations to Racial Conflict: Merchant-Customer Interactions in Urban America." *American Sociological Review* 67(1): 77-98.

Vargas, Robert. 2016. *Wounded City: Violent Turf Wars in a Chicago Barrio*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Further reading:

Duneier, Mitchell and Harvey Molotch. 1999. "Talking City Trouble: Interactional Vandalism, Social Inequality, and the 'Urban Interaction Problem.'" *American Journal of Sociology* 104 (5): 1263-1295.

Anderson, Elijah. 2011 *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co.

Lee, Jennifer. 2006. *Civility in the City: Blacks, Jews, and Koreans in Urban America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Martinez, Cid Gregory. 2016. *The Neighborhood Has Its Own Rules: Latinos and African Americans in South Los Angeles*. New York: NYU Press.

Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 1999. "Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods." *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (3): 603-651.

Week 6. URBAN POVERTY

Because cities are concentrations of wealth and economic production, urban poverty presents an anomaly for both human ecology and political economy. Several generations of sociologists have hypothesized that urban poverty persists because the spatial concentration of poverty has debilitating effects on the social networks, individual dispositions, or capabilities of the poor. We will consider some research relevant to the evaluation of these hypotheses.

Required reading:

Small, Mario. 2002. "Culture, Cohorts, and Social Organization Theory: Understanding Local Participation in a Latino Housing Project." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(1): 1-54.

- Sharkey, Patrick. 2008. "The Intergenerational Transmission of Context." *American Journal of Sociology* 113 (4): 931-69.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2012. "Disposable Ties and the Urban Poor." *American Journal of Sociology* 117 (5): 1295-1335.
- Smith, Sandra Susan. 2005. "'Don't put my name on it': (Dis)Trust and Job-Finding Assistance among the Black Urban Poor." *American Journal of Sociology* 111(1):1-57.

Further reading:

- De Souza Briggs, Xavier, Susan J. Popkin and John Goering. 2010. *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sampson, Robert J., Jeffrey D. Morenoff, and Thomas Gannon-Rowley. 2002. "Assessing 'Neighborhood Effects': Social Processes and New Directions in Research." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 443-78.
- * Wilson, William J. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 7. SEGREGATION, GHETTOS AND ENCLAVES

A classic explanation for how both economic opportunity and persistent and concentrated poverty can coexist in American cities points to the racial segmentation of housing and labor markets. We will consider the measurement of racial segregation, the evidence about the processes that produce racial segregation, and the consequences that segregation has for concentrated poverty. We will also discuss what, if anything, is distinctive about segregation in the United States.

Required reading:

- \$ Nightingale, Carl H. 2012. *Segregation: A Global History of Divided Cities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. **Excerpts TBA.**
- Garrido, Marco. 2013. "The Sense of Place Behind Segregating Practices: An Ethnographic Approach to the Symbolic Partitioning of Metro Manila." *Social Forces* 91 (4): 1343-62.
- Massey, Douglas and Jonathan Tannen. 2015. "A Research Note on Trends in Black Hypersegregation." *Demography* 52 (3): 1025-34.
- Tach, Laura. 2016. "Diversity, Inequality, and Microsegregation: Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in a Racially and Economically Diverse Community." *Cityscape* 16 (3): 13-45.

Further reading:

- * Quillian, Lincoln. 2013. "Segregation and Poverty Concentration: The Role of Three Segregations." *American Sociological Review* 77 (3): 354-379.
- * Massey, Douglas S. and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- * Wilson, William Julius. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Vintage.

Logan, John R., Richard D. Alba and Wenquan Zhang. 2002. "Immigrant Enclaves and Ethnic Communities in New York and Los Angeles." *American Sociological Review* 67 (2): 299-322.

Logan, John R. and Charles Zhang. 2010. "Global Neighborhoods: New Pathways to Diversity and Separation." *American Journal of Sociology* 115 (4): 1069-1109.

Week 8. STIGMA, CONTAINMENT AND BANISHMENT

The rise of punitive crime-control policies in the late twentieth century United States has important consequences for the management of urban space. How does the stigma of criminality attach to persons and places? Under what conditions do police and other authorities seek to contain stigmatized persons, and under what conditions do they seek to banish them? What does the new punitive order do to urban social life?

Required reading:

Anderson, Elijah. 2011. "The Iconic Ghetto." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Society Science* 642(1): 8-24.

Stuart, Forrest. 2016. *Down, Out and Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life on Skid Row*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Further reading:

Goffman, Alice. 2009. "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto." *American Sociological Review* 78(1): 339-357.

Beckett, Katherine and Steve Herbert. 2009. *Banished: The New Social Control in Urban America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wacquant, Loïc J. D. 1993. "Urban Outcasts: Stigma and Division in the Black American Ghetto and the French Urban Periphery." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 17(3): 366-383.

Quillian, Lincoln and Devah Pager. 2001. "Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime." *American Journal of Sociology* 107(3): 717-67.

Week 9. SUBURBANIZATION

Scholars of segregation and urban poverty have emphasized the consequences of suburbanization for the social networks of the poor city residents left behind, but what does suburban development do to the social networks, lifeways, and political behavior of the people who move to—or grow up in—the suburbs? We will consider the challenge of defining the suburb, the causes of suburbanization, and the contributions of various methods for studying the effects of suburbanization.

Required reading:

Niedt, Christopher, ed. 2013. *Social Justice in Diverse Suburbs*. Temple University Press.

Further reading:

- Cheng, Wendy. 2013. *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Oliver, J. Eric. 2001. *Democracy in Suburbia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Fava, Sylvia Fleis. 1956. "Suburbanism as a Way of Life." *American Sociological Review* 21(1): 34-7.
- Whyte, William H. 1956. *The Organization Man*. New York: Simon and Schuster, esp. Chapter 23 ("Classlessness in Suburbia").

WEEK 10. GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

Classical models of spatial assimilation and suburbanization emphasized that middle- and upper-income people tend to flee from low-income neighborhoods, but it became obvious in the late twentieth century that sometimes white and upper-income people move into low-income neighborhoods. Under what conditions does gentrification occur, and what are its consequences for individuals and communities that were already located in these neighborhoods?

Required reading:

- Hwang, Jackelyn and Robert J. Sampson. 2014. "Divergent Pathways of Gentrification: Racial Inequality and the Social Order of Renewal in Chicago Neighborhoods." *American Sociological Review* 79 (4): 726-751.
- Martin, Isaac William and Kevin R. Beck. 2017. "Gentrification, Property Tax Limitation, and Displacement" *Urban Affairs Review*, published online before print.
- Freeman, Lance. 2006. *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Further reading:

- Centner, Ryan. 2008. "Places of Privileged Consumption Practices: Spatial Capital, the Dot-Com Habitus, and San Francisco's Internet Boom." *City & Community* 7(3): 193-223.
- Brown-Saracino, Japonica. 2009. *A Neighborhood that Never Changes: Gentrification, Social Preservation, and the Search for Authenticity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- * Smith, Neil. 1996. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. New York: Routledge.