COVID-19, transport inequities and vulnerabilities in the Global South: A case of Kolkata Metropolitan Area in India

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Abstract

Since urban areas are heterogeneous, transport inequities constitute a common trait of cities across the global north and south alike. Furthermore, the contemporary millennia have evinced rapid expansion of megacities in the global south without adequate planning and to experience dilating inequities across the socio-economic-ecological front. With the COVID-19 pandemic, when these urban centres faced disruptions on a colossal scale with subsequent lockdown and closure of public transport to contain the contagion, the nuances contingent to the social and spatial heterogeneity that characterise urban settings were magnified even further. Existing studies have called much attention to transport equity concerns that has arisen due to mobility restrictions; however, a consolidated strand with regards to the global south is lacking, though materialising such a discourse is crucial in context of the stark heterogeneity incumbent in cities of the global south. With this backdrop, the study sets out an exploratory attempt to assess transport equity concerns during COVID-19, involving a case study of the Kolkata metropolitan area in India. Preliminary findings reflect a spatial correspondence between COVID-19 risk zones and disempowered populations facing transport disadvantages. Further, the glaring digital divide has acted as a catalyst (including teleworking, ride-hauling and online deliveries) by excluding and marginalising disadvantaged populations. Such an alarming situation throws critical questions as to whether our cities are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable in the long run and highlights a dire need among geographers to identify space specificities in urban settings in the global south for the promotion of not just healthy, but sustainable urban mobilities.
Exploring the theme of recuperation after disaster, through theatre: reflections on the “Atlantis” Hidden Spire project 2021 at the Old Fire Station, Oxford

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Abstract

A new play, Atlantis, written and produced in 2021 at the Old Fire Station, Oxford, had the theme of Oxford, in the context of an imagined future where the population is dealing with the consequences of flooding caused by climate change. The production had a unique relationship to the host building, it was part of the Hidden Spire project which is named after a Victorian hose tower where leather hoses were hung. This name relates to the well known quote describing the skyline of Oxford, from a poem by Matthew Arnold “Thyrsis”, 1865; ‘...and that sweet “City” with her dreaming spires’. The play was a promenade performance, where audience members experienced different scenes in a route through a series of rooms. Since 2011, the building has hosted two charities, an arts centre and a homelessness charity, Crisis. In this unique situation, experiments are undertaken into ways to involve the homeless in arts activities. The process of development of Atlantis was made as inclusive as possible- as well as workshops with Crisis members and workers, the public were invited to be involved in contributing ideas as part of a Creative Collective, and workshops were run in scriptwriting, also set design, costume design etc. as the show was coming together. This structure meant that the development of the show had a unique relationship to the community. The title Atlantis, decided on during the development process, brought connotations of the Ancient Greek myth of a sunken city. In this paper I am going to explain development of the script, then I will focus on aspects of the show; music, costumes, etc. Finally I will discuss how I explored theatre with similar themes after the production had finished, finishing with concluding thoughts.
A vision of GEOBIGDATA fundamentals and its applications in geographic science

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Abstract

As a result, from continuous progress in informatics, the internet of the things and particular facts like common GPS devices availability, free software and the improves for spatial data production & sharing, Geo Big Data emerges as georeferenced Big Data that supports the analysis of complex spatial temporal phenomena. About fundamentals, literature frequently cites its characteristics as a set of v´s: (value, volume, velocity, visualization, variety, veracity) and the sources: people generated, sensors & machines and biometric operations. This research is aimed to contextualize those fundamentals in Geographic Information Technologies (specifically GIS and remote sensing) as a family of tools that have been supported the development of geographic science. The content is deeply based on relevant nowadays examples (for instance Sustainable Development Goals and SARS Covid 19 pandemic) that show how Geo Big Data strengthens knowledge discovering for geography and for another fields of science. In this context, is also pertinent to talk about widely useful technologies like cloud computing, data science, artificial intelligence and data mining as tools that maximize analysis effectiveness. As main conclusion, value most be a criterion for defining a Geo Big Data practice and it might be joined in different ways for others v´s. As innovative technical approaches are highlighted: the massive amounts of people generated data, high capacity of cloud computing for processing big amounts of satellite imagery and the innovations in remote sensing sensors with high temporal & high spatial resolution. On the other hand, some important technical skills could be more familiar for a data scientist than for a geographer background, however, this Big Data era brings the possibility of learning though online resources provided by scientific or academic institutions.
(Re)Examining *Adda*: Everyday Spaces of Sociability in West Bengal, India

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Abstract

*Adda* is a distinct Bengali speech genre and is the practice of friends getting together for long, informal, and non-rigorous conversations. The distinct activity has been dominated through literature as a remnant of modernity produced by Bhadarloks (upper caste Bengali men) in the urban spaces of Kolkata, a metro city. This paper aims to reconstruct the meaning of adda spaces as an intrinsically everyday space of social congregation, leisure, fun, and compulsion that is not necessarily linked to Bhadraloys. I argue that adda is both an activity and space simultaneously. At the same time, adda can't be disassociated with the space, be it ephemeral, which gives the (multiple) activities meaning and/or vice versa. However, the youth's notion of adda has drastically changed, producing spaces of resistance to contend with the intergenerational stigma attached to being young. In the same vein, Adda being dominated by men in public pushes women to look for private and invisible spaces to do golpo (chit-chat or long conversations) and other leisure activities. This study, hence, unravels the (re)formulation of young masculine identities in the spaces of sociability in its socio-spatial context. It also highlights the lack of understanding of the masculinities of young people in the margins of West Bengal. Thus, I argue addas are a sociable space of diverse identities and practices not only limited to big cities and/or Bhadraloys. Here, using adda, I also suggest reorienting the argument from ‘city’ to ‘urban’, i.e., small town in this case, which also calls for the de-hierarchy of the urban in its totality. The study bases its findings on a qualitative approach while using conversational interviews with a set of the young population from the town of Cooch Behar, West Bengal, India.
Postcolonial pessimisms and Spatial Practice: Focusing on the spatial practice of Fatahillah Square, Indonesia

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Abstract

The geography of postcolonialism requires spatial practice, and the concept of postcolonial spatial practice can be found in the debates of postcolonialism. This paper tries to overcome the pessimisms of postcolonialism by analyzing the cases of postcolonial spatial practice. A case space is Fatahillah Square located in Jakarta, which has been transformed from a space that symbolized the tragedy of colonialism into a space of culture and art through the postcolonial spatial practices. Through the characteristic of hybrid and emancipatory plurality found in this spatial practice, it refutes the pessimisms of postcolonialism and calls for additional postcolonial practice and analysis. The pessimisms of postcolonialism are associated with the debate over the acceptance of poststructuralism. The voices of postcolonialism arguing over whether to accept poststructuralism or not, criticize each other on the basis of lack of political capacity and liberation, and raise pessimisms to each other. However, at the conclusion of this paper, an "unintended, voluntary" postcolonial spatial practice is discovered, and the two pessimisms that seemed irreconcilable are being overcome at the same time. In other words, the postcolonial practice that can be expected to be liberating and politically competent is found. This finding suggests new possibilities for geographic recovery after disasters. The time of recovery is also a new opportunity for geographical recovery. In particular, Indonesia is preparing for a time of transition after the disaster, such as relocating its capital. This paper argues that postcolonial capacity needs to be further emphasized so that this transition can be a more just, peaceful and emancipatory transition.
Diaspora of Disaffection: Gender role reproduction among transnational Indian female trailing spouses of high skilled migrants; an intersectional Feminist reading of Identity among Indian women in the global transition.

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Abstract

Rapid globalization has resulted in large-scale migration from India, over the last decade. The paper aims to explore the high skilled migration from India and the dynamics of privileges and problems of skilled professional migrants and their families. Conradson (2005) defined the term ‘middling migrants’ as a diverse category of mobile migrants who can be categorized as skilled immigrants in a higher income category. The gendered dimension of the phenomenon is less explored and the spouse women in this process of migration remain largely invisible (Raj, 2000). As wives of professional Indian migrant men, the spouses are themselves often professionals and highly educated but following migration, their professional life often faces a disruption or change in their professional identities creating a strong undercurrent of disaffection, with distinct implications for their wellbeing. As the changes occur within a global context, these ‘spouses’ occupy a contradictory gendered positioning within the Indian diaspora, creating complex intersectionality. Are they global mascots of a gender role ideal and cultural continuity of a nationalist ideal? Or is their invisibility hiding gendered and neo-racial connotations affecting their lives, overshadowed by class-empowered position? Its implications are an area worthy of further study. The presentation aims to explore the fragmented identity construction within the Indian diaspora through existing literature and collected data on Indian female trailing spouses exploring the relevance of identifying gaps and establishing the need for understanding of this phenomenon. The study aims to understand the complex post-colonial intersectionality hidden in the situation via a critical feminist epistemological framework. A qualitative transnational study employing in-depth interviews and narrative methods for data collection has been conducted as part of this doctoral thesis to explore this phenomenon.
Exploring the utility of deep learning in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to infer socio-economic development

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Abstract

Substantive and reliable data on the economic well-being of a population is crucial to the effective formulation of research and policy. With this information, governments are able to understand and monitor the living standards of their people, evaluate the effectiveness of targeted policies, and make decisions about the allocation of scarce resources. However, there currently exists a large gap in data available on these measures of economic development, particularly in developing countries, severely hampering future policy efforts. Due to this, the regions of low socio-economic background are not addressed and the lives of those residing there are negatively impacted. Hence, this project aims to explore the feasibility of applying remote sensing-based methods of poverty prediction in other countries to the Indonesian context. Specifically, this paper describes an independent research project conducted by a pair of Sixth Form students under the mentorship of a Research Scientist at the National Institute of Education in Singapore. In this project, we aimed to develop a Deep Learning model that is able to output relative wealth index classifications based on the Daytime Satellite imagery of a specific region. The program utilized capable and established Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). This project involved data preparation, training, fine-tuning our model, extracting our CNN features, and finally conducting ridge regression. We utilised proxy training tasks. With our results, we sought to demonstrate the applicability of this poverty prediction Deep Learning framework to a new geographical context.

The latter involved model training, fine-tuning the model, and finding appropriate datasets with which the model could be trained. Using the results of this experiment, we hope that the necessary policies can be made to improve socio-economic backgrounds, the likes of which could not be done before.
Understanding the impact of Covid-19 on self-drive tourists' behaviour in the context of domestic Chinese market—from a spatial pattern perspective

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic may change tourists’ perceptions of safety and health risks associated with travel, which could affect their travel behaviour, including attractions to visit, distance of travel and choice of travel companions. Self-drive tourists are viewed as pioneers after the Covid-19 lockdown, due to its intention of limiting social interactions with strangers. However, there is limited knowledge available on the spatial behaviour of self-drive tourists. Previous studies have not captured the sequential patterns and associated leisure components hidden in travel data. This study employed GPS itineraries publicised on social media, traced by a mobile phone application, to identify and analyse self-drive tourists’ spatial behaviour. GPS itineraries, constructed from the stops and movement directions, can capture the holistic travel information and then the sequential patterns are detected. This study employed multiple tools to mine self-drive itineraries. Such tools, including semantic trajectories computing methods to process the raw itineraries and the Prefix Span algorithm for mining the most frequent travel sequence. The above methods are demonstrated in the chosen context of Beijing residents who had self-drive journeys in Beijing. Self-drive itineraries within National Day Golden Week periods, covering 2019, 2020 and 2021, were used to reveal changes to spatial behaviour before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research findings show self-drive tourists’ leisure components shift from cultural-oriented to the natural-oriented. The introduced analytical methods can benefit other researchers when mining frequent patterns in other studies. These findings have application for tourism practitioners designing tourism products to address tourists’ needs during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.
Spatial and social inequalities in a ‘hypermobile’ society: internal mobility for education in China

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore how different forms of educational mobility are made necessary for students from various social backgrounds in a ‘highly mobile modernity’. It builds on existing work on intra-national educational mobilities in China by exploring how families from across the socio-economic spectrum have utilised spatial mobility as a means of achieving social mobility through education. We draw on data from interviews (n=40) with Master’s degree students at an elite Chinese university from three social class categories, selected through a screening questionnaire: ‘non-affluent’, ‘non-elite middling’, and ‘elite’. To do this, we draw on the work of Giddens on the ‘disembedding’ of people and communities, as well as that of Bourdieu and Kaufmann, conceptualising the capacity to be mobile (motility) as a form of capital. We find that students from non-affluent backgrounds tended to experience educational mobility that was less strategic, less ‘valuable’ in terms of enabling further accumulation of capitals, and more disruptive. In contrast, students from the social elite tended to have a greater level of control, using mobility as a resource to access the most potent forms of symbolic capital through education. Overall, our study challenges the binary of mobile/privileged and immobile/underprivileged common in migration studies. Students from various social backgrounds may be mobile, but what is important is the level of control individuals and families have over the variety and frequency of mobility they undertake.
Navigating Grief: An autoethnographic tale of open water swimming and grief

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Abstract

"Wednesday 5th June 2019. That’s when my world stopped. That’s when my dad’s heart stopped. Out on a social ride, I steamed ahead in front of dad and made it to the bottom to wait. I waited and waited. Anticipating the glee on my dad’s face when he reached the bottom. But it didn’t come. All that came was someone telling me my dad wasn’t well. Grabbing my bike, I pedalled and pedalled but couldn’t go any faster. My chest and throat tightening up the closer I got to seeing him on the floor. I dropped my bike and ran. But I knew. There and then, when I kneeled by his head and looked into his eyes, he wasn’t there. He was gone.“ The benefits of open water swimming have been documented throughout the literature including the element of restorative pleasure (Murray & Fox, 2020); creating a more positive view of your body (Denton & Aranda, 2020); and ultimately the transformation of one’s mood over time (Foley, 2017). Previous literature has allowed us to acknowledge these benefits, however there are few accounts of personal narratives which provide the lived experience of the transformative nature of blue spaces, especially in association with grief. Autoethnography was chosen as a method to present my experiences of navigating grief. I have chosen to share my experience of using open water swimming, as a transformative practice which helped me find hope after the loss of my father. Personal stories offer a new vantage point from which to make a unique contribution to social sciences (Laslett, 1999; Wall, 2008). My purpose in writing my autoethnography is to be able to offer some insight into how natural spaces can reconnect us back to reality after personal trauma, such as grief.
AI Urbanism: The Singapore experience

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Abstract

This paper seeks to present a survey of Singapore’s new wave of state-built digital tools and services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it connects to its larger smart urbanism project, also known as the Smart Nation programme. In particular, we set out to analyze the logics that emanates from these novel digital interventions, how they operate on the urban environment and the population, and their effects on urban and citizenry morphologies. To do this, we begin by reviewing what Smart Nation is and its importance in shaping the current trajectories of state-driven technological (urban) developments in the era of COVID-19. Next, we examined a series of state-led technological implementations that have emerged over the last two years, which we have classified into the following categories: digital solutions that assist citizens with the changing rhythms of everyday living; data capturing sensors and gantries to aid authorities in contact tracing efforts and enforce vaccination differentiation measures; and robotics for automated policing and cleaning activities; and the use of AI and automated tools in public health to improve service delivery and care to patients. In this paper, we argue that the ongoing digital urbanism, along with its design thinking and operations, helps uncover the contemporary conjectures of Singapore’s digital urban aspirations and the governing strategies of the state.
“It’s not just white men in hardhats”: Opportunities and barriers for a Just Transition away from oil and gas in the UK

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Abstract

The latest climate science clearly presents the need for a transition away from further oil and gas exploration. In May 2021, the International Energy Agency’s net zero 2050 roadmap highlighted that Paris-aligned decarbonisation does not allow for investment in new oil and gas fields. In the UK, the oil and gas industry contributes substantially to the economy, it is also a large and politically divisive contributor to the climate crisis that is failing decarbonisation and emissions targets. Previous UK industrial transitions, including that from coal, have been widely criticised. The low-carbon transition away from oil and gas requires a new approach, one that might profitability be achieved through a “Just Transitions” focus. Based on 25 expert interviews with stakeholders from across the oil and gas sector, including industry members, policy-makers, union members and NGO representatives, as well as the results of a scenarios workshop, this paper explores the opportunities and barriers for a Just Transition away from oil and gas in the UK. Emergent themes cover the precariousness of work, the incumbent dominance of the oil and gas industry, the technological readiness of future technologies and differential policy ambitions across the devolved nations. The paper concludes with lessons for the UK, wider policy contexts and conceptual explorations of the Just Transition.
Urban transformations to keep all the same: The power of ivy discourses

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Abstract

The concept of urban transformations has gathered interest among scholars and policymakers calling for radical change towards sustainability. The discourse represents an entry point to address systemic causes of ecological degradation and social injustice, thereby providing solutions to intractable global challenges. Yet, so far, urban transformations projects have fallen short of delivering significant action in cities. The limited ability of this discourse to enable change is, in our view, linked with a broader dynamic that threatens progressive commitments to knowledge pluralism. There are discourses that, cloaked in emancipatory terminology, prevent the flourishing of radical ideas. The ivy is a metaphor to understand how such discourses operate. Ivy discourses grow from a radical foundation, but they do so while reproducing assumptions and values of mainstream discourses. We are concerned that urban transformations functions as an ivy discourse, which reproduces rather than challenges knowledge systems and relations that sustain hegemony.
Geographies beyond recovery- sustaining voluntary action

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Abstract

The voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) has been at the forefront of the response to Covid-19 at different spatial scales. The Mobilising Voluntary Action (MVA) study was a collaboration of voluntary sector experts and academics investigating variations in these responses in the four UK jurisdictions. The pandemic revealed the continued importance of communities of place and the outpouring of neighbourliness and mutual aid was one of the defining features of the early response to Covid-19. While collaboration and partnership working were widespread, the pandemic exposed the geographical unevenness in the capacities, infrastructures and relationships that underpin and enable voluntary action to flourish. Moreover, the pandemic restrictions imposed on everyday life simultaneously constructed and removed barriers to engaging in volunteering, undermining efforts to create volunteering opportunities for all. The protracted nature of the crisis has increased the fragility of the sector and while the strength of community spirit is something to be celebrated, it is not a remedy for underfunding. In this paper, we look beyond the pandemic moving from mobilising to sustaining voluntary action to consider lessons from Covid-19, drawing upon our project findings to consider the challenges and opportunities the VCFSE faces as we edge towards recovery. This landscape of voluntary action will be analysed against the backdrop of devolution and austerity to emphasise the importance of the wider political context in creating the conditions for voluntary action to thrive.
Big Data, Microwork: Labour geographies of microwork in Canada and Tunisia

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Abstract

Microwork is the systematically hidden ‘clickwork’ that trains and sustains machine learning algorithms. This study brings together mappings of the structures of power in the data economy with concerns for the geographically and historically situated experiences of microworkers in a labour geography of microwork in Canada and Tunisia. The logics of technical-rationalization which govern Big Data processes are also those which govern microwork, as microworkers both labour on and labour under machine learning algorithms. And just as critical data studies’ efforts have revealed uneven geographies of data control, microwork literatures reveal parallel geographical distributions of data work: while the location of data production (both paid and unpaid) may be diffuse, the control and profit centers are geographically concentrated (e.g., Thatcher et al., 2016; Casili, 2017; Anwar & Graham, 2020). Considering the different colonial histories, global economic positions, and linguistic environments of these two sites, this study examines, through surveys, forum observations, and interviews, the forms of precaritization that bring people to this work as well as the precarity of the work itself, paying particular attention to how these factors cut across gender, race, class, as well as spatial scales. In both contexts, microwork complicates distinctions between workspace and homespace, as microwork regimes leverage gaps in access to sustainable flexible employment which especially impact women. While narratives of the death of distance invoke a flattening of space through the internet, data infrastructures rely on socio-spatial differentiations in a coproduction of uneven spaces on and offline. In this light, this study explores workers’ digital spatial praxis – like the acts of resistance of data workers past, “largely viewed as ‘feminized,’ that is, less powerful or responsive” (Mullings, 1999) – as multiscalar resistance and organizing.
Transnational Femininity Experiences Of The Turkish Women in Europe: Migrant Women in the Digital Environment

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Abstract

In the 1960s, Turkish citizens migrated to European countries in accordance with labor agreements between Turkey and European countries. In the first years of this migration, women migrated with their husbands or their parents. Some of them did not migrate and waited their husband/family in their homeland. Some of them migrated through marriages as brides. Although many women are still going to abroad with their families or independently, these women’s profile is different from the previous ones. Many women migrated in recent years for a job, education or their partners’ education and work. I am claiming that their “white collar” situation is very important for their integration into Europe although they were not born in there. They do not need foundations in classical way and their way of solidarity is different from the former migrant women.

I want to look at the “new” faces of the Turkish migrant women, who are independent and highly qualified, through their social media accounts. I have chosen a social media account called “migrant women” which is a meeting point for different women from different social situations. Are there any new challenges for them and how are they dealing with? What is the role of social media for their solidarity? To sum up, I focus on the digital female immigrant appearances that differ with the changing immigrant profile and show the background and effect of this representation change. This is ongoing research and I will present the initial findings.

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Abstract

The Mass is a core element in Catholic worship and is an occasion that brings the priest and parish community together on a regular basis helping to create and preserve a sense of identity. The decision to close all churches for religious services across the island of Ireland in 2020 due to Covid-19 provided the catalyst for the celebration of Mass by Catholic priests at Mass Rocks across the island. Mass Rocks were a feature of open-air Catholic worship during Penal times (1695-1756) when Mass was celebrated in secret in order to avoid detection by authorities keen to arrest officiating priests. Found in various hidden locations including fields, glens and mountain sides, close to Holy wells or along the Irish coastline (Bishop 2016, 829) Mass Rock sites provided a sacred space for bringing the sacraments of penance and Holy Communion to the people, helping to place the priest at the centre of the lives of the community. The Mass Rock became one of the most visible and enduring symbols of Catholicism at this time and this has remained the case throughout subsequent centuries and into more contemporary times despite the changing nature of Catholicism in Ireland. This paper explores the role played by Mass Rocks in articulating survival and resistance within the Catholic church in Ireland during the pandemic and concludes that Mass Rocks not only ensured the survival of Catholicism in the past but have remained vessels of a sacred force that plays a crucial role in maintaining Catholic identity today. Mass Rocks provide a tangible and experiential connection to Irish heritage and tradition but, in an era of recovery with churches open, it asks whether they will continue to play such a crucial role in community worship.
Covid-19 or geographies of inequality? The case of the Lisbon metropolitan area and an essay for the future

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Abstract

The geographic expression of Covid-19 impacts proves that the planet's surface is not the map where everything is equalized, displaying deep social and economic inequalities that have settled in societies and territories. These contrasts are detected at different scales: between geographical North and South, between countries, between regions, or even in metropolitan areas. Having this in mind, the paper presents the territorial inequalities of global events, such as the current pandemic crisis of Covid-19, in the case of Lisbon Metropolitan Area. This goal will be addressed through a methodological approach that considers the multidimensional nature of territory and, therefore, the diversity of responses to this radical event. The analysis will also consider the impact of other global events such as recent economic crisis.
The problem of scale in natural disasters: physical processes vs. impact and recovery

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Abstract

The paper shows that the complex, nonlinear relations between causes and effects of natural hazard events can be effectively approached, if considered from the point of view of the scales that are involved. Hazard-specific scales regarding space, time, and event size are followed for successive stages of disasters. We compare, on one hand, patterns of a wide range of physical processes involved in natural hazards, and on the other hand, relevant aspects of vulnerability related to natural hazard events. We find that the tail of the studied distributions can provide meaningful insights into the reasons for the strong nonlinear variability of scale. In spite of the diversity of processes implied in various types of hazards, a consistent picture emerges, which is dominated by scale discrepancies between event occurrence, event impacts, and recovery efforts. In this context, we highlight significant implications, both positive and negative, of the increasingly tight interconnectivity that characterizes our world. Based on this analysis, we point to some of the main factors that would make natural disasters avoidable.
The value of Black barbershops in the post-pandemic city

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Abstract

Black barbershops are protected racialised spaces mostly frequented by Black men but also women and children. This paper draws on findings from an urban ethnographic study, which explores how they act as key social institutions for the local communities they serve by creating the conditions for the barber and customer(s) alike to experience intergenerational contact, counsel, grooming, debate, entrepreneurship, creativity and leisure. Reflecting on the relevance of this everyday form of Black space-making, the paper considers the importance of these small Black businesses as community spaces in the context of the pandemic, which has shone a light on how Black barbershops are seen as trusted spaces and can act as information hubs in their localities and important gatekeepers to so-called ‘hard-to-reach’ communities. Recently in the U.S., community-based interventions have sought to engage barbershops as sites for health education and the delivery of healthcare services in relation to Covid-19 vaccinations. And in the UK, community initiatives in Black barbershops have also showcased the important role these businesses can play in public health generally by raising conversations about mental health and awareness of prostate cancer symptoms amongst Black men. Drawing on this existing evidence alongside primary data from participant observations and qualitative interviews, the paper serves as a provocation by analysing how Black barbershops function as alternative sites of recovery, restoration and respite for Black communities in Britain who have been at the sharp end of the pandemic.
Exploring how intersectionality and the everyday topology of young adults' relationship networks inform their socio-politics

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Abstract

Political theories have oscillated between young people’s apathy, activism and apoliticism in recent times, but there is still a dearth of exploratory research into the motivating factors behind young people’s socio-politics in everyday life. This presentation, drawing from an empirical study into youth socio-politics, posits that intersectional identity factors such as ethnicity, class, and gender combine with relationships (both familial and peer) to remain central to the way socio-politics and nation state is conceived and performed by young people. Furthermore, the research suggests that understanding the interconnected nature of these factors are essential as young people navigate the consequences of precarious political climes. This short paper draws upon field research for my PhD, conducted in one UK city in 2018, and 8 case studies with young people aged between 18 and 25. The research framework invited the participants to share narratives about their relationship to place, space, their perceptions of self-identity and close relationships and ways in which these connected to their concepts / experiences of everyday life and ‘politics’. The paper explores how these factors combined to impact on young people’s relationship with the state, interweaving with their decision-making and experiences of precarity and introduces the centrality of care to their socio-political identity formation.
Extracting for the green transition: Labour and ecology in rare earth mining in Northern Myanmar

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Abstract

Following the military coup in Myanmar in February 2021, the extraction and export of rare earth elements from the Northern part of the country to China has expanded, solidifying Myanmar as the third most important global supplier on the heels of China and the USA. This expansion has taken place within the broader post-coup political economy allowing the companies involved to usher in new constellations of the labour-nature-ecology nexus that were more successfully resisted by rural working peoples prior to the coup. Engaging recent literature across the fields of political ecology, agrarian studies and environmental economic geography, this intervention scrutinizes the rise and expansion of rare earth mining in Northern Myanmar. In our analysis, we in particular seek to heed calls in the literature to more carefully unpack firm strategies of appropriation of nature and exploitation of labour within natural resource industries. We do so by shedding light on the constitutive conditions surrounding the binding together of capital and labour at the upstream end of this global production network: from local dynamics of war, socio-economic precarity and an increasingly pressed landlord military-state to world market dynamics surrounding what the International Energy Agency calls a looming supply gap of ‘transition minerals’ to facilitate the so-called green transition. The intervention contributes by elucidating on the ground realities for working peoples in this ‘green frontier’ industry.
Landed property in the ‘labour regime-nature-ecology nexus’: the case of the South African mining industry

Gavin Capps
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Abstract

For Marx, the formation and reproduction of a regime of ‘free’ wage-labour rests on a distinctly modern (i.e. capitalist) form of landed property that decisively ruptures the metabolic relation between (extra-human) nature and the productive and reproductive capacities of the direct producers. Yet, this ‘monopoly of terrestrial globe’ also mediates the appropriation of nature by capital, thereby conditioning the dynamics of land-based accumulation and enabling landed proprietors to capture value in the form of rent. Marx highlights these different dimensions of ‘modern landed property’ across the three volumes of Capital in respect of ‘purely economic’ forms of wage-labour and land tenure that are wholly regulated by the ‘dull compulsion’ of market relations. But his analysis is equally applicable to those situations where labour is subjugated to capital through mechanisms that entail varying degrees of extra-economic coercion, and the dispossession of land is only partial. This is illustrated by the case of the South African mining industry, which was founded on a regime of ‘unfree’ black, male migrant-labour whose reproduction was in turn underpinned by systems of ‘communal’ tenure in the racially segregated ‘homeland’ areas. However, under the impetus of the global resources boom, these are being transformed into South Africa’s new mining centres, in turn enabling local chieftaincies to capture rent as a condition of access to the mineralised land that was historically defined as a communal possession. As such, the social relation of landed property remains central to this intensely racialised instance of the ‘labour regime-nature-ecology nexus’, but now as a condition of the spatial expansion of mining capital and hence the extended appropriation of nature, rather than the reproduction of the historic mechanism through which it procured and controlled cheap mine-labour.
The social reproduction of natural resource extraction: gendered implications of Turkey's coal rush in rural labour regimes

Coşku Çelik
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Abstract

In many countries of the Global South, neoliberal rural transformation has been characterised by the removal of state subsidies for small-scale farmers, privatization of agricultural state economic enterprises, rising control of global agribusiness firms on agricultural production, and dispossession of farmland for large-scale investments in natural resource industries. Under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) governments, Turkey has been a prime example of these patterns of accumulation and dispossession. In addition, the country has been facing coal rush policies of the AKP governments with the aim of utilising domestic coal to overcome the problem of energy supply security. By applying a conceptual framework centred on the contradictions embedded in the processes of production and social reproduction, this paper will explore the gendered implications of Turkey’s coal rush on rural labour regimes.

Drawing on three-year research conducted in the Soma Coal Basin, one of the leading basins of coal extraction and tobacco farming in Turkey, this presentation will analyse the gendered patterns of proletarianization and rural labour regimes since the mid-2000s in Soma as a result of the neoliberal transformation of coal extraction and agricultural production. The presentation will pay attention to the transformation of women’s (i) petty commodity production as unpaid family farmers, (ii) agricultural wage work, (iii) reproductive work as miners’ wives and subsistence producers.
Standing on precarious cities: labour mobility and social reproduction in mining cities in Chile

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Abstract

Long-distance commuting between large cities and the areas in which resource extraction takes place is triggering manifold contradictions, such as the weakening of the different expressions of value capture at the cities and regions in which extraction takes place, and consequently changing the conditions for social reproduction in those places. Although high skilled mining labor and suppliers take a plane and fly away from extractive regions after finishing their work shifts, the remainder of the mining workforce remains there and inhabit precarious living conditions and toxic environments (Atienza, 2021). This paper examines the changing conditions of social reproduction in mining cities in Chile under the reconfiguration of labor dynamics of mining value chains through the long-distance commuting of labor. The core argument is that the precarious conditions of social reproduction in mining cities in Antofagasta show how the compulsory anchor of extractive industries at resource deposits (Bridge, 2008) forces them to uphold a portion of the workforce closer to the extraction sites, and consequently, the cost-efficient benefits of long-distance commuting unleash new patterns of even development. While the literature about production networks of resource extraction have pointed to the role of extractive cities as logistic hubs (Scholvin et al., 2019), the lens of social reproduction allows to examine and distinguish the living conditions and characteristics of the mining workforce from an everyday life perspective (Baglioni & Mezzadri, 2020; Katz, 2001), and discuss the role that the precarious expression of mining cities plays in production networks.
Coal, land and labour regime in India’s extractive economies

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Abstract

Recent global debates on climate change and ‘just transition’ away from coal has drawn new attention to coal as a resource, its use, and its impacts on nature, labour and communities. Several studies from both Global North and South countries have identified the central role of labour in the transition processes. However, the economic and ecological landscapes of coal mining regions and labour situated within those are already under transitions in the dynamic processes of capital accumulation. Especially holds relevance for India, with multiple coal economies with its distinct and exploitative labour regimes. Moreover, land conflicts in India further contributes to the complexities of the coal economies and their labour regimes. In this context, the paper explores the co-constitutive relationship between land, coal, and labour in India’s state-owned coal mines and how these relationships shape labour regimes. Drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork in coal heartland of Eastern India, the paper argues that the changing materialities of land and coal together shapes the labour process in the coal mines. The exploitation of labour drawn from the local dispossessed communities and migrant communities from different parts of the country is at the core of capital accumulation. They are organized by capital using the social differences of class, caste, gender, and ethnicity in the overlapping technical and social relations of coal extraction processes. The paper concludes by reflecting upon the debates on ‘labour in nature’ and poses complex queries on ‘just transition’ and the decarbonization efforts in coal mining regions.
Drivers and Implications of Diminishing Agricultural Practices in the Garhwal Himalaya

SAURAV KUMAR
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Abstract

Borders are increasingly individualized, imposed on and within people. Individuals’ identities influence how spaces, such as borders and borderlands, are lived and perceived. In the US, immigration controls, once limited to the international line, have, through discourses, penetrated far into the territory and influence many – if not all – aspects of life. One such aspect is access to healthcare. While considered by many as a basic human rights, healthcare, through mandatory identification, immigration arrests in hospitals and lack of information sharing, is a space where borders are experienced. Identity markers that influence how one experiences borders, such as language, immigration status and ethnicity, are transposed to how one experiences and perceives healthcare access. Building on interviews with Latina women residing in four US border states (California, New York, Pennsylvania and Texas), this paper analyzes how women perceive and experience their access to reproductive health services. Through an intersectional geopolitical approach, it explores how immigration status, language, information access, and geographical position influence access to care, creating a patchwork of access not limited to states’ laws. This paper offers an empirical contribution to the study of healthcare access in US border states, looking at and beyond the border line to analyze how immigration discourses have penetrated other aspects of life, and have ripple effects in both conservative and progressive states for individuals with various immigration status. Borders are not only international markers, but rather influence all aspects of daily life.
The co-constitution of ecology and labour regime in South Africa's racial capitalism

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Abstract

That capitalist development entails the destruction of natural, or moral, economy is now widely discussed, and with it climate change and the climate emergency. But in a future of uncertainty and ecological crisis, too much theory remains abstracted from ecological issues. The climate crisis is deeply connected to global and social inequality. This inequality is profoundly racial as socio-economic, ecological, and racial injustice are deeply intertwined. Essential processes shaping the modern world system – colonization, primitive accumulation, slavery and imperialism are deeply racialized, as the racial capitalism literature discusses. Furthermore, Pulido has suggested, that we can usefully see environmental racism as constitutive of racial capitalism.

The proposed paper discusses these issues through a conceptual/historical account of the articulations of racial capitalism, labour regime, and ecology in South Africa. South Africa’s particular form of racial capitalism is founded upon a labour regime with severe ecological consequences. The term ‘racial capitalism’ was (most likely) first used in order to characterize South African capitalism and to demonstrate how apartheid’s racist system of racial segregation was rooted in colonial mining capital’s structuring of economy and society, and not simply Afrikaner settlers’ racism. It was on these earlier colonial foundations that the apartheid regime built from 1948 onwards, and which mars still society and economy, now with neoliberal, financialized dimensions. Stark consequences for land use have followed, as well as for greenhouse gas emissions as industrial development has been heavily coal based. As Southern Africa is today warming twice as fast as the global mean, multi-year droughts have already brought greater food scarcity, while workers and communities in coal dominated areas face an uncertain future. That social, racial, and ecological injustice have long gone hand in hand must be recognized and addressed for any transition to be just.
Labour's war of transition: electric vehicles and the UK car industry as a site of class recomposition

Nicholas Beuret
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Abstract

The transition to a ‘low carbon’, or ‘net zero’ economy is now not only underway but constitutes a profound reorganisation of existing neoliberal labour regimes. Combining vast public sums, new regulatory environments and the creation of novel asset classes and financial mechanisms, this transition, far from comprising an orderly and consensual process as often called for in transition literature, has opened up a new series of labour conflicts and infrastructural disruptions. This paper will focus on the under-examined question of how labour regimes are being affected by the ‘greening’ of existing industries.

Working through the 2020 Nissan announcement to transform their Sunderland (UK) operation to build electric batteries with substantial UK and local government financing, this paper will examine how this greening of Nissan intersects with preceding union campaigns to resist job losses and changes to working conditions. Bringing this into conversation with regulatory and government fiscal incentives, this paper will ask how the transition within existing industries is being realised on the ground through labour struggles and within the framework of ‘net zero’ as a government-funded business plan (Beuret 2020).

Situating this case study in the broader political economy of transition as a terrain of struggle, and taking up a reading of Gramsci that puts discontinuity of the terrain of struggle at the centre of grounded theorisation, this paper will outline both how class is being recomposed through the green transition and how this struggle works to actively disrupt the ‘places’ of production that previously underpinned the ‘antagonistic’ stability of neoliberal labour regimes (Baglioni et al 2022).
Just transition and electric vehicles in the German automotive industry

Zafer Örnek
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Abstract

This paper examines contradictions between labour demands in the global North and concerns around environmental and working conditions in the global South. Through the lens of global production networks in electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing, I look at how labour organisations in industrialised countries approach the shift towards EVs experienced by their members on the one hand, and what this shift actually means for working and environmental conditions in raw material and processed chemical supplying regions on the other. A narrow understanding of just transition for workers and their communities in industrialised countries - avoiding deindustrialisation, securing jobs as much as possible and channelling workers to new positions - is not comprehensive enough for a just transition for all labour regimes involved in global automotive production networks. This narrow and regional focus on just transition does not problematise other labour regimes; it prioritises securing raw materials and promotes ILO standards for economic upgrading. Instead, a broader level of understanding should seek policies for just transition with better environmental and working conditions in both the global South and the global North. This can be achieved by acknowledging that efforts to maintain the relative stability of a labour regime in one location/region of a global production network can sometimes jeopardise stability, or can require instability, in other labor regimes. In other words, avoiding becoming another Detroit or Nokia risks others to experience labour regimes that keeps exploiting labour and nature, sometimes in an increasing rate.
What difference does the sea make? Comparing labour regimes in tuna fisheries

Liam Campling, Hyunjung Kim
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Abstract

The paper intervenes in debates on the significance of different environmental conditions and ecological processes in shaping labour regimes through a comparison of two types of workplace in distinct global value chains. Working conditions and employment relations on longliners catching (mainly) for Japan’s sashimi market are widely seen as a lot worse than on purse seiners catching tuna for canning. We explain this difference through a comparative labour regime analysis examining similarities and differences along three axes: (1) tuna population dynamics, oceanography and the political economy of resource access; (2) industrial organisation, GVC governance and value distribution; and (3) systems of recruitment and composition of multinational crew. The paper contributes to labour regime analysis by demonstrating the specificity of work at sea as well as the relative significance of the materiality of the commodity and GVC governance in creating difference in labour regimes, even in industries extracting the very same species.
The "total ecology" of agrarian labour regimes: fragilities of glasshouse horticulture in the United Kingdom

Adrian Smith
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Abstract

Glasshouse food production has been seen as a system which aims at total bio-political control of food production. This “total ecological” system of protected cropping is seen as an environment through which the entire growing system can be controlled through mechanisms such as growing cultures, atmospheric control, seed technologies, nutrients and irrigation, pollination, pest and disease control, and adoption of technologically controlled systems. However, existing research tends not to explore the labour regimes of this “total ecology”. Focusing on the “the metabolic interaction” between living labour, food supply chains, and bio-political regulation and control of food production, I explore how a labour regime formulation can highlight the fragilities, rather than controlled totalities, of glasshouse ecologies. Glasshouse horticulture is never a total system of control, even if that is the aim of growers. Many of the fragilities of glasshouse food production turn on the role of human labour in the process of food production. I explore these dimensions through a focus on labour supply and social reproduction in the context of UK glasshouse clusters in order to reflect on the labour regime-ecology nexus, and how labour/nature can be thought together.
Conservation in the Anthropocene: recovering other-than-human animals in an anthropocentric world

Virginia Thomas
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Abstract

Rapidly declining biodiversity is both an acute and chronic disaster; while humans have long been responsible for species and habitat loss this reality is now critical. The ‘Anthropocene extinction’ is the Earth’s sixth mass extinction event and has reached the stage where the loss of one species can trigger an ‘extinction cascade’ of others.

Narratives of ecological restoration abound, ranged along a spectrum from cautionary tales with dire predictions to optimistic visions of ‘salvific futures’. Within these narratives lie deeper questions of to how to avoid or achieve them, either via an attempted return to an imaginary Edenic past or by embracing novel and emergent ecosystems. Each of these approaches are risky and unsettling for different reasons and require major changes either in ways of living or ways of thinking.

I explore such narratives of recovery by examining attempts to restore or reinforce extirpated or depleted populations of other-than-human animals. My research focuses on the red kite and the European wildcat, both of which had/have been almost entirely extirpated from Britain. Efforts to reintroduce the red kite can be considered highly successful in numerical terms – reduced to a remnant population of fewer than twenty in the early 1900s there are now thought to be approximately 4600 pairs in Britain. Meanwhile restoration of the wildcat is ongoing, with intensive breeding programmes aiming to establish populations for release which can become self-sustaining. Such programmes are complicated by the presence of free-living domestic/wildcat hybrids, and associated disagreements regarding whether these cats should be eradicated as ‘impure’ or embraced as occupying a liminal space in a highly anthropogenic landscape to which they are better suited than their wild counterparts.

My research seeks to understand how other-than-human species can recover in the Anthropocene and how their recovery may assist our own.
“In Wales ... we do things differently”. The British politics of asylum dispersal and emerging national (self-) imaginaries of hospitality in Wales

Franz Bernhardt
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Abstract

The 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act marked a watershed moment for the politics of asylum in the UK, setting the discursive groundwork for the now infamous ‘hostile environment’. This article is the first to compare the discursive framings of this formative act by the Home Office and UK government with those of the then newly devolved Welsh assembly and government. It shows that alongside the dominant framings of fear, unease and hostility that marked the discursive politics of the UK government on the topic of asylum, there was an emergence of contrasting national narratives and imaginaries of welcome and hospitality in devolved Wales. Drawing on a discourse analysis of archived British and Welsh policy documents, newspapers and semi-structured interviews, the article argue that those hospitable imaginaries constituted a form of national identity formation against an imagined less hospitable ‘Other’- the British sovereign state. This national politics of discursive differentiation against the sovereign state and its exclusionary politics of asylum leads to new acts, sites, and scales of citizenship.
Communicating research beyond the academy: the 'Finding Home' touring art exhibition

Candice Boyd
The University of Melbourne, Australia

Abstract

The 'Finding Home' exhibition was creatively co-produced by researchers and participants from the Engaging Youth in Regional Australia study (2019-2021) and included contributions from them as well as four works from commissioned artists. The study sought to better understand the affective and material dimensions of the internal migration decisions made by Australian youth from three regional towns. Based on interviews with 50 young people from the 'millennial' age group, 16 artworks were produced during 2020 including photographs, textile works, an Aboriginal artwork, and a silent projection (video). With the aim of communicating the findings from the research in a publicly engaging way, the exhibition toured Australia during 2021, visiting each of the towns involved in the research and finishing in the nation's capital of Canberra. The exhibition travelled over 10,000 km, was seen by over 1,000 people, and was evaluated via just over 100 visitor surveys. This paper will present an overview of the exhibition and the results of the evaluation, as well as offering critical reflections on the role of exhibitions in communicating research in human geography.
(Re)negotiating space as a form of resistance: Micro infrastructures in the logistical mega-infrastructure of Indonesia’s Sea Toll port.

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Abstract

The rise of the global supply chain has intensified the circulation of goods and capital across the world. While critical geographers have situated logistics as an enabling factor and precondition for rapid expansion of the circulation of goods, people and capital in the capitalist economic system, more nuanced studies to understand nonviolent resistance from the grassroots have been relatively few. Taking Indonesia’s Sea Toll port expansion in Jakarta as a case study, I argue that coastal communities, which have been displaced and dispossessed in the process of mega port development, are politically active agents and economically calculative. The development of micro infrastructures within the ongoing mega port construction stage is a material example of how coastal communities have considered political, social, and economic factors in navigating through multiple challenges i.e., displacement and dispossession, intensified extreme weather, and economic hardship induced by the prolonged Covid-19 pandemic. Data was collected through qualitative methods, including 30 in-depth interviews, 22 households survey, five group discussions, and field observation in the New Priok Port area between April 2021 and February 2022, and was complemented by interviews with 12 government officials and experts, and review of regulations and policy documents and insights from media articles analysis. This paper aims to contribute to the broader debate on the gendered grassroots resistance to megaprojects in post-colonial states.
Children's Mobility during the COVID Pandemic in the Czech Republic

Daniel Kaplan
Masaryk University, Czechia

Abstract

The area of mobility of children has attracted growing attention from the wider scientific community including children’s geography over the past decades. The growing body of literature focuses on local mobility as well as global migration and stresses out issues of independence, danger, virtuality, etc. The current global situation has influenced a wide spectrum of human activities, including mobility. This article deals with changes in children's daily mobility during the first lockdown and online education period (Winter – Spring 2020). Adopting a perspective of interdependent mobility, we focused on the relationship with companions in natural and virtual space. Children between 12 and 14 years of age provided their diary they made in Czech language lessons. Later, these children were invited to the interview. Overall, the results suggest that the participants gained new responsibilities and autonomy to cope with, including managing their leisure time. They enjoy the company of their friends (however in virtual space more) and even with their family on short trips during the weekend. They spent significant time outdoors, going to natural places and even discovering new places in and out of the area they are familiar with. These findings add substantially to our understanding of children's mobility under specific, although repeatable, events.
International education ‘here’ and ‘there’: geographies, materialities and differentiated mobilities within UK degrees

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Abstract

This paper explores how mobility is experienced differentially in international education, through a comparison of two ostensibly very distinct student groups. Both groups have non-UK citizenship and have studied, or are studying, for a British higher education degree – one in the UK, the other in Hong Kong. Through a dual focus on the materialities and mobilities within international higher education, we consider the extent to which physical mobility across borders is a defining feature of the experiences and outcomes of those engaging in international education. We argue that combining perspectives of mobilities and materialities challenges simplistic dichotomies of im/mobility amongst students and unsettles the boundaries between onshore and offshore international education. Our paper provides a more granular and nuanced understanding of the relationship between im/mobility, international higher education and social reproduction.
Fee-paying, but priceless: International students entrapped by travel bans

Heidi Østbø Haugen
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Abstract

This presentation explores how international students push back against dominant understandings of student mobility, such as soft power notions and human capital theory. Recent geo-political crises, including Covid-induced travels bans and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, have highlighted the vulnerability of middle-class self-funded international students. I use data from interviews with foreign students at Chinese universities who organize under the hashtag #takeusbacktoChina to analyze how they argue for the right to continue their education. While waiting for China’s border to open, the students experienced time as simultaneously excessive and scarce: Remote studies made their days monotonous and dreary, while seeing other youth advance professionally, form a family, or pursue graduate degrees created a sense of urgency. The students mobilized against the notion that their time was disposable by emphasizing their unique future contributions to their home communities and student life as a formative and irretrievable period for all individuals.
A substitute or alternative? -- ‘disrupted international students’ in transnational higher education institutions of China

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Abstract

The global outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic from 2019 onwards has overwhelmingly shaped the form and experience of global education, including those of international higher education. In particular, the mode of provision and consumption of international higher education has inevitably changed, by not only immigration regulations and admission policies but avoidance of teaching and learning on campus. This infrastructural disruption and the caused double exclusion from in both sending and host societies have produced transnational (im)mobility of international students (see for example, Cairns et al., 2021; Hu et al., 2020; Mok et al., 2021; Raghuram and Sondhi, 2022). In 2020 and 2021, many Chinese prospective international students choose to quit or suspend their offers from prestigious foreign institutions and to alternatively study in transnational higher education institutions within the Chinese border, according to the provisional policy of Ministry of Education’s (PRC) introduced in September 20201, 2. In this case, we draw on interviews of the ‘disrupted international students’ admitted through this policy to a transnational higher education institution in Guangdong, China, to explore their circumstance, decision-making, and experience of transnational higher education during the Covid-19 pandemic. Through narratives of their expectation and experience, this research aims to reveal how ‘disrupted international students’ in China negotiate with risk and uncertainty in the (im)mobility associated with international higher education during the pandemic, and how these students navigate the connection between their present educational experiences and future career and/or mobility aspirations through commonalities and differences between a transnational higher education institution in China and the foreign institutions where they would otherwise study.
Transnational Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Role of Regional Embeddedness of International Branch Campuses for Crisis Affectedness

Jana Kleibert, Marc Schulze, Tim Rottleb, Alice Bobée
Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space, Germany

Abstract

When starting to operate subsidiary campuses abroad, universities have become transnational, economic actors, who both contribute to and build upon enhanced cross-border trade of services as well as mobility of investment and people. During the Covid-19 pandemic, campus access and international travel for students and faculty has been largely restricted, presenting international branch campus development as a business model with existential financial challenges and exposing the vulnerability of transnational education service provision. Thus, better understanding is needed of how universities as transnational actors can develop mitigation and recovery strategies in the face of crisis.

This analysis explores to what extent international branch campuses worldwide have been affected by the pandemic and which factors have mitigated the impacts for the campuses. Empirical evidence is drawn from a survey conducted with senior executives of international branch campuses worldwide in early 2021. The survey finds that while the branch campus model generally proves to be crisis-prone, those campuses that are stronger regionally embedded have been less severely hit by the pandemic. The paper contributes to debates in economic geography and regional studies by conceptualising international branch campuses’ regional embeddedness in opposition to transregional embeddedness. We underline the key role of regional embeddedness of campuses for reducing crisis affectedness and argue that it plays an important role in making international branch campuses and transnational education more viable and resilient.
“Schools do their jobs, but we are most important”: Transnational migrant families' parenting logics and educational decisions in China

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Abstract

This paper pays attention to the transmigrants' choices on their children's formal and informal education during mobility. Drawing on the in-depth interviews with 24 transnational migrant families who moved to China from economically developed countries and raised children in Guangdong, this paper focuses on the parents' narrative accounts on what educational decisions they had made and how they negotiated with the choices under a migratory context. It proposes that for dealing with the uncertainty in children's future (e.g., the possibilities of frequent migration, living in diverse cultural environments, the "machines-replace-human-jobs" threat and extreme climates), transnational parents usually highlight children's developments in multiple languages and social skills that can enable children to adopt unexpected changes and social upheavals. Even though the participants heavily weigh the training for social capabilities, it doesn't mean they do not care about where children go for formal education. There is a common debate within these transmigrant families: "international schools, bilingual private schools, ethnic schools and Chinese public schools, which one is most beneficial to my kid?" This paper argues that the educational decisions are made by evaluating not only the families' future plans but also their accessibility to information, social resources and sense of trust in the receiving society. There are always struggles and compromises existing in their decision-making, which lead the parents to emphasise the importance of family education and positive parent-children relations, for the reasons that the parents believed those are the means to compensate for the "imperfect" formal educational choices. This paper enriches our understanding of parenting and family education under a migratory context, which also calls for more attention to studying the role of the family in transnational education played in the age of recovery.
One small step: Ecological temporalities and practices of resistance in Naples

Carlo Inverardi-Ferri
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Abstract

This paper contributes to the burgeoning literature on environmental labour studies by examining labour mobilisation in the pandemic era. The paper investigates the ongoing labour struggle at a by-now ex-Whirlpool plant in Naples. The multinational corporation announced closing the site in 2019, six months after committing to a 250-million-euro investment plan with the Italian government. Despite experiencing continuous sustained growth during the pandemic, Whirlpool finally closed the plant in December 2021. Within this context, the paper documents how temporalities dictated by Covid-19 shaped the varied practices of resistance implemented by local workers. In so doing, it aims at responding to recent calls for cross-fertilisation between labour geography, political ecology, and environmental labour studies.
Sustainable Work in a Sustainable Port? Temporality, Ecology, and Labor in the Port of Rotterdam.

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Abstract

This paper is based on ongoing fieldwork with unions, port officials, and dockworkers at a coal transshipment terminal in the port of Rotterdam. Under increased public pressure to reduce CO2 emissions, the port of Rotterdam is in the process of becoming a “sustainable port” that can, however, still provide economic growth. This paradoxical drive for “green growth” leads to tensions and contradictions on the work floor and has far-reaching repercussions for the everyday lives and health of dockworkers, particularly in industrial sites that are to become obsolete. That is, the recent unexpected boom of the coal industry in combination with a corporate strategy geared towards a shrinking global coal market, has led to increased pressures on the work floor and has left workers feeling physically exhausted and anxious about their health and job security in the long run.

This paper draws ethnographic attention to the way labor arrangements are being reconfigured across multiple scales in light of the energy transition, thereby contributing to facilitating a dialogue between labor regime analysis and political ecology. In particular, I will examine how workers are subjected to the rhythms of the global economy, how they try to mitigate detrimental health effects to their bodies in the long run, and how they deal with the prospect of supposed obsolescence in a sustainable port landscape. In so doing, this paper draws on recent scholarship in the anthropology of time and argues for the importance of temporality in conceptualizing the articulation of labor and ecology.
Socio-ecological crisis and labor agency: The impact of environmental events on unionism trajectory on salmon culture in Chile

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Abstract

Labor studies has underestimated nature as a factor shaping the labor-capital relationship (Baglioni and Campling, 2017). Moreover, the ecological crisis, which natural resources industries are exposed, has not been under the debate of labor organizations. In order to contribute to fill that gap, this research seek to build bridges between the production of nature theory (Moore, 2011) and the union power resources approach (Schmaltz, 2008) by studying how the ecological crisis affects the labor agency trajectory in Chilean salmon culture industry. Chile is a typical case of advanced neoliberalism which bases its economy in natural resources industries. It is the second largest producer of salmon in the world and salmon culture is the second most important branch in Chilean economy. However, this activity is strongly criticized because has generated a tremendous damage to the ecosystem where it operates and the precarious working condition of the jobs that it provides, with a fragmented and weak unionism despite strategic position of workers in the Chilean economy. Using path dependence and process tracing methodologies, two critical junctures are analyzed: 2008’ ISA virus and 2016’ Toxic algae bloom. Preliminary results suggest that formal subsumption of nature are the main mechanism that reinforces the path dependence of unionism, through moving harvest centers to other regions, closing some processing plants, changing firms ownership and reducing production. The results of that actions are employment insecurity, contract flexibility, wages reduction and weakening of associativaive and societal power resources.
Work Towards Green Futures: Labor Rights and Standards in the Renewable Energy Sector

Brendan Davidson, Dimitris Stevis
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Abstract

The two-pronged crisis facing us—climate change on the one hand and global inequities on the other—raises questions about how we can conceive of an energy transition that simultaneously uplifts workers while upgrading the environment.

A growing body of literature concerns itself with technocratic aspects of a transition to renewable energies, but the quality of these jobs has generally received less systematic attention in this critical sector (García-García et al. 2020, p. 7; Kouri and Clarke 2014; Zwicki 2016). To address this gap, we collect, review, and synthesize academic and grey literature that explores the absence or presence of labor rights and standards, for both ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ workers across the value chains of the low-carbon energy technologies, i.e., wind, solar, battery storage, electric vehicles, and biofuels.

Our goal is not limited to investigating the absence or presence of conventional labor rights and standards. We also explore the existence of what can be called environmental labor rights (Stevis et al. 2020), i.e., stipulations included in collective agreements and industrial relations that serve to enhance the role of workers in promoting the quality of the environment within and outside workplaces (Adapting Canadian Work 2018; Telljohann 2008).

This synthesis contributes to the growing field of environmental labour studies in several ways. First, it provides a systematic review of the literature on conventional labor rights and standards; second, it expands the focus by providing a review of the literature on varying interpretations of green jobs; and third, by doing both across all stages of the value chains of key renewable energy technologies, ensuring our review is not geographically or demographically limited.
Energy peripheries in the midst of low-carbon transition: Emerging labour regimes under a socio-ecological fix

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Abstract

As ‘green’ policies, emanating from Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal, gain momentum, low-carbon energy transition is brought to the forefront of recent geographic and labour research. The definitely uneven and unjust nature of such a transition affects especially the so called ‘energy peripheries’, i.e. peripheral and rural communities that are locked in energy activities. Critical approaches highlight that this technocratic low-carbon transition strategy is essentially a socio-ecological fix, emanating from capitalist efforts to maintain power relations. Such fixes in energy peripheries become an intriguing issue, due to their effects on restructuring local labour regimes towards a direction of greater precarity.

This issue is explored in Western Macedonia (WM), Greece, displaying attributes of an energy periphery. Indeed, WM is a rural region, featured as an energy hub and locked-in lignite extraction and energy production activities for more than fifty years; while currently entering a post-lignite era under a fast-track process. Key research questions focus on the constitution of the local labour regime, role of energy transition in reshaping this regime and its transformative process. The methodological approach follows a literature and policy review; a secondary data analysis of the labour market; and a primary research, using Focus Groups participatory method for gathering views of employment consultants from the Manpower Employment Organization. Findings indicate that WM enters an outmigration era due to jobs’ scarcity, unemployment and loss of its industrial/mining profile; while transformation of energy geographies according to capital accumulation needs results in severe uncertainties in emerging local labour regimes.
Agrarian transformation across space ad time: A case study of two villages in South India

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Abstract

This article attempts to examine the labour and employment transition in the agriculture sector in India from a micro-level perspective. It is based on fieldwork conducted in two nearby villages in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, which have been previously studied in 1994. Though the nature of change in agriculture production and local ecology is similar in both the study villages, the trajectory of change in the agrarian labour market varied between them. While commodification of labour smoothly proceeded in Vinayagapuram, the village of Veerasambanur had a less commoditized labour scenario. Major differences were observed in the labour process, labour relations, wage trends and even the impact of macroeconomic policies on the labour market in the respective villages. The study situated this differential outcome in the structure of social relations and institutions in the study villages. While Veerasambanur was marked by a cultivator-labourer nexus which prevented collective action by the labourers, Vinayagapuram had a neat separation between the cultivators and the wage labourers. Even amidst differences, the gendered constitution of the agrarian labour force was a major point of similarity between the villages. It is found that women’s unpaid work has a major role in sustaining the households engaged in farming. While the agrarian crisis, in general, caused men to out-migrate, the working of the social institutions ensures that women continue to concentrate in the agriculture sector, disproportionately bearing the work burden. The study finds that the labour transition in these villages, on the whole, is socially and ecologically embedded.
‘A city is a theatre’: on the kinaesthetic politics of making action in Joan Littlewood’s visionary urbanism.

Luke Dickens
King's College London, UK

Abstract

This paper contributes to an expanded understanding of aesthetics and movement in the context of recent dialogues between cultural geography, performance studies and architecture. Concerned with recuperating sensational and affective experiences in the built environment, such debates are used here to outline a kinaesthetic politics of radically reimagining the urban in more playful, pleasurable and participatory terms. Exemplary of these impulses is the visionary urbanism of the British theatre director, Joan Littlewood, whose compelling arguments for approaching the city as a theatre initiated a long running series of experiments under the auspices of her Fun Palace project (1962-75). Centered on what Littlewood termed ‘making action’, a disruptive practice intended to encourage new urban subjectivities, social relations and modes of inhabitation to emerge, two key influences on her kinaesthetic politics are discussed. First, the work of Hungarian dancer and choreographer, Rudolf Laban, which shaped Littlewood’s deep fascination with the free flow of everyday urban life. Second, the Russian theatre practitioner, Konstantin Stanislavski, whose proto-cybernetic systems of naturalistic acting informed Littlewood’s emphasis on the Fun Palace as something akin to a structure of feeling: an embodied self-realisation machine operating on the level of improvised movement, role play and the scenographic sensibility.
Monitoring their own demise: Climate change labour in the triple-nexus of blue, green and bio-economies

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Abstract

Climate adaptation and mitigation is hard work. From boardrooms of multinational firms to policy halls of development donors, it is clear that significant time and effort is put into locating and delineating land and nature for climate programs, and the wider green, blue and bio-economy. Yet less understood is local climate change labour equally vital to making adaptation and mitigation work, and in particular, making nature legible for capital accumulation under these market-based programs. While generally seen as separate from climate adaptation, this triple-nexus is now more and more enmeshed in the socio-cultural and ecological fabric of those hired to ‘take on’ climate work. From prisoners controlling forest fires in the US and community volunteers sandbagging floods in the UK, to schoolchildren replanting trees in Madagascar, the way labour is envisioned in these settings has similarities with now ubiquitous precarious gig workers, first identified in post-industrial setting of the Global North – flexible, disposable, underpaid and invisible. This work focuses on blue carbon sequestration and mangrove restoration in Madagascar. The framework I put forward differentiates between a managerial class of scientific and bureaucratic workers I call ‘proficians,’ with that of the local low-paid ecological precarious or ‘eco-precariat.’ I discuss the fate of those dispossessed and others pushed to the margins of vital coastal fishing areas and mangroves, mainly on the backs of their own self-monitoring and enforcement. I discuss ways that this eco-precarious labour framework can be applied to climate labour and the green gig economy more broadly.
Attuning to the Pulsebeats of the Planet: Becoming Species, Becoming Earth

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Abstract

Planet Earth is quickly emerging as a category, challenge, and context for art, aesthetics and ethics (Spivak 1999, Chakrabrarty 2019, Clark and Szerszinsky 2021, Huijbens 202). In this presentation we explore two cases deliberately mobilizing relations between aesthetics, embodiment and kinaesthetics to renegotiate the relation between urban politics and our planet by suggesting experiments with dominant urban rhythms and refrains (McCormack 2013). While urban policies in Copenhagen are explicitly centered around values of sustainability, livability and diversity, it has recently experienced tensions and struggles around urban commons and land use following intensified urban development and construction of new urban neighborhoods on abandoned industrial sites as well as recreational areas. This situation has in been met by interventions from artists and activists thematizing the need to renegotiate human-nature relations in the city. Becoming Species impersonates the grass, lichen, and moths that we share urban space with, giving voice and body to them through costume, choreography, movement and performance. In Schottländers performance Bodyscaping embodied encounters between performers/participants bodies and the various soils from urban development projects deposited in the harbour is used to to explore and experiment with an urban landscape in the making as well as the relations emerging between humans, soil and nonhumans in the process. By working through embodied encounters with earth, soil, and the lives nonhuman “others”, both cases demonstrate the potentials of performance, art and aesthetics in constituting another urban planetary subject than that of globalized, neoliberal urbanization (Ruddik et al 2018) and attuning urban bodies, movements, lives and politics to the pulsebeat of the planet.
Working together on a socioecological transformation: Transformative strategies and scaling practices of German worker-led companies (WLCs)

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Abstract

In view of socioecological costs of capitalist economic structures, the central role of labour within these structures encourages closer investigations on its transformative potential. As active spatial agents, workers as labouring bodies have the capacity to (re-)shape their (economic) environment (‘labour agency’). As focus of this paper, worker-led companies (WLCs) present a particular form of collectively organised labour regimes. Through their actions and decisions, WLCs are actively restructuring both conventional institutional frameworks and the organisation of their social relations. Thus, they show how labour can play an active role in transforming existing production structures. Against this backdrop, empirical insights from Berlin and Hamburg disclose a high variety of different strategies that are applied by workers in order to consciously foster a socioecological transformation. As one research objective, these strategies are discussed as expression of their transformative labour agency. Furthermore, special attention will be paid to scaling practices and the transformative effects their diverse strategies might have on labour and production structures beyond the context of a single company.
Kinaesthetics and public life: the social life of everyday amateur sports and fitness

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Abstract

This paper will explore what can be learnt about urban public social life through a focus on the kinaesthetic – that is the aesthetic experiences available through kinetic movement. Research on urban public social life often focuses on fleeting moments of encounter between strangers, on the thick ties of community that exist within cities, or on the associations developed through political activity (Talen, 2018; Watson, 2006; Wilson, 2017). However these make up just a small portion of the social activities that people take part in as part of their everyday lives. Research focusing clearly on kinaesthetics can help broaden, deepen, and add texture to accounts of everyday public social life (Latham and Layton, 2020).

Based on my PhD research, this paper will explore the multiple associations that people get pulled into through amateur sport and fitness – where the social, kinetic, and aesthetic are inseparably combined. It will draw on my season long ethnography of an amateur football team based at the Hackney Marshes in East London. In turn the paper will develop a clear pragmatist understanding of kinaesthetics, and contribute to the important ways that access to kinaesthetic activities makes up the everyday social life of cities.
Driving Britain’s Roads 1990-2020

Lynne Pearce
Lancaster University, UK

Abstract

Given that the era of British road building on a grand scale ground to a halt in the 1990s, it is easy to underestimate the changes that have impacted on the qualitative experience of driving the road network over the past quarter-century. With the exception of the odd by-pass, the fragmented implementation of Smart motorways, and the piecemeal improvement of trunk routes creaking under the strain of c. 10 million additional vehicles, modifications to routes and infrastructures have been minimal. However, when close attention is paid to the constantly evolving kinaesthetic experience of driving the road network during this period, a different picture emerges. Both congestion and the rescaling of vehicles has rendered travel along many highways and by-ways unrecognisable and the sensations formerly associated with driving have ceased to apply. For example, the exhilaration of speeding over a gleaming motorway flyover at 70 mph has been replaced by the dismay of sitting, stationary, beneath it while staring at the visibly ageing concrete pillars. In this paper, I draw upon my ‘auto’-biographical memoirs from this period in order to investigate the implications of such change vis-a-vis recent debates on place attachment and decarbonisation.
Abstract

Energy systems are undergoing profound transformation in response to decarbonisation pressures. This transformation involves far-reaching changes to how energy is produced, distributed and consumed, linked to a broad set of economic, social and spatial relations. Energy system decarbonisation is a point of unclasping whereby restructuring creates opportunities for change in these social and economic relations as new technologies, fuels and ways of using energy undergo processes of change. But decarbonisation is not a standalone restructuring process. Other powerful trends in economic organisation also have significant implications for energy systems and their impact on social and spatial relations. In particular, there has been much interest in recent years in the so-called fourth industrial revolution whereby automation and digitisation are significantly changing how societal systems are organised, from manufacturing processes, to urban governance, and everyday household activities. In this paper we consider how the two processes of decarbonisation and automation entwine in what we term energy transition 4.0, with consideration for implications for labour regimes. In doing so we extend labour regime theories by drawing on wider understanding of the nexus of different forms of labour relations and how they in turn shape labour agency, organisation, control and resistance across systems of provision. Empirically the paper focuses on different sites within energy systems to consider the interplay between decarbonisation and automation across a range of formal and informal labour processes.
An Aesthetics of Evacuation: mobility, emergency and aesthetic categories

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Abstract

Evacuation is a strange term we use to describe some forms of mobility in emergency. It speaks to humanitarian corridors and repatriation and rescue flights amidst conflict; ways to whisk some away from disasters; routinised practices to escape from building fires. Yet, it seems in itself to be a negative act, a conditioning property of absence, especially through the universalising manoeuvres it often assumes and performs. Evacuation appears at once empty, while also emptying – even of evacuation's very own meaning. It lacks substance beyond a very technical sense of a process, while it itself is able to withdraw the relations of other things and events to a technical register. And yet, evacuation is often bound up in very specific felt-based aesthetic evaluations that might be much more judgemental. These are combined by drawing on the work of Sianne Ngai on minor feelings, and her attention to the ambivalent aesthetics of the ‘gimmick’ and other aesthetic categories. This paper explores evacuation aesthetics, and a wider politics of emergency mobilities in terms of their ‘aesthetic registers’ and the futural affects that narrativize aesthetic experience (Ngai 2012) in one way as a hopeful, open address that the future will be taken care of. Yet evacuation comes with closing, disclosing, illusionary and confusing powers that work precisely because those registers are so easily conflated.
Moving matter: the aesthetics and politics of earthly movements

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Abstract

Some earthly movements cannot be observed spontaneously but have required centuries of cumulative scientific observations, interpretations, and technological developments to make them discernible, accessible, and visible, as masterly exemplified by Denis Cosgrove’s reflections in Apollo’s Eye (2001). This paper examines the aesthetics and politics of such earthly movements, having been aptly portrayed by Michel Serres in his inspiring book Angels: A Modern Myth (1995) as (im)material messengers, when he argued that lava flows transport information inherent within the matter—in German effectively im Material. By engaging with the aesthetically stunning multi-layered representations of glacial movements by Louis Agassiz in his early book Études Sur Les Glaciers (1840), which seems to precede the Swiss scientist’s support of creationist and racist ideologies in his work on comparative zoology at Harvard’s Lawrence Scientific School, and by revisiting the highly contested multi-stage ‘cycle of erosion’, proposed by William Morris Davis in the National Geographic Magazine (1889, 197) but elaborated on as the ‘geographical cycle’ in the Geographical Journal (1899), I argue that these two major scientific contributions to the history of geography and to broader understandings of earthly movements need to be situated within the evolving multidisciplinary epistemological interests and research techniques of geology, geography, and the history of art in order to appreciate more fully their intertwined co-constitution, complementary partialities, and mutual enrichment, yet neither without critically taking into consideration their instrumentalization in capitalist accumulation processes, as powerfully argued by Kathryn Yusoff at the RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2021 in her eye-opening deconstruction of the often admirable, lavishly coloured, and almost artistic looking geological cross-sections as commodifications of the earth, nor without interrogating the complex cultural politics of the discussed movements, authors, and discourses to inform topical debates about the contemporary challenges of climate change, racism, and populism.
Putting “Flesh on the Boneyard”; Military Aesthetics and Mobile ‘Soft Combat’ regimes

Sharon Wilson
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Abstract

For Gillen (2014) the museum today plays an increasingly important geopolitical role around the world, especially as a site for understanding “political contestations”. In this paper, I suggest that the aesthetic affects play a role in form of ‘Soft Combat’ in the ongoing challenge of “epistemic violence” inherent representational practices of the museum (Tolia-Kelly, 2016, drawing on Gayatri Spivak). By sharing fieldwork conducted at the Pima Air and Space Museum and the “Boneyard” where 4,000+ retired aircraft are stored at the Davis Monthan Military Base, Arizona (USA), I focus on the affective dimensions of a tourist tram tour to observe the affective geopolitics that circulate between retired military objects as aesthetic affects, the tour guides and the visitors themselves. This discussion also includes reflections from a walk of the perimeters of the military base fence, the ‘Boneyard’ once publicly accessible now a blank spot on the map, according to AMARG is ‘Closed Indefinitely’. The aim of the research is to “put flesh on the boneyard” in a way that highlights how tourist bodies become targets of inscription. How do these affective spaces reinforce prevailing ideologies and relations of power? How might the affective homology between bodies and the past reframe the social and somatic fields of understanding? By moving through and beside the aesthetics of the ‘dead’ planes in their potential as “relational entities”, I suggest they do not “rest in peace” but instead “come alive” in a performance that unfolds into the landscape as a phantasmagoria of military power.
Aesthetics of Colonial Mobility

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Abstract

This presentation examines the aesthetics of colonial mobility as an artistic practice against the colonial-modern reorganisation of mobilities in a colony, specifically the Korean Peninsula under the Japanese occupation (1910-1945), in terms of the “emotional regime” as an essential element of all stable political regime (Reddy). To this end, it analyses a Korean novella, “A Day in the Life of Kubo the Novelist” (1934) by Taewon Park, which describes a novelist’s travel for a day in Gyeongseong [old name of Seoul], the administrative capital of colonial Korea, using mobility infrastructures (for example, tram line and new roads), built triumphantly by the colonial government. The colonial mobility intended to allow the colonised to enjoy mobility, thereby adapting their emotions to the colonial emotional regime. Notably, the colonial government elaborated to embody the senses of cheeriness and happiness in its colony, mainly from the mid-1930s. However, urban travel allowed the novelist, a colonial flaneur, to experience only emotional oscillations between the obsessed cheeriness-happiness and the empathised sadness-solitude in many encounters on the move that happened inside the tram, on the street, and in the train waiting room; thus, the aesthetics of colonial mobility can be considered destabilising the colonial regime.
The airport terminal and the aesthetics of movement: regulated flows, kinaesthesia, and accessibility

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Abstract

Today’s airport terminals are defined by an aesthetic of function and ordered movement. These buildings include corridors, automatic doors, and cordon barriers that regulate people’s movements as well as more subtle material designs such as flooring patterns, light fixtures, and ceiling structures that suggest the primary routes through the interior. While architects aim to incorporate designs that will successfully direct people to follow particular paths, they also expect these designs to be aesthetically pleasing. The terminal’s functional aesthetic, however, contrasts with the visual media that airports and airlines use to stimulate one’s desire to fly. Airline advertisements often portray the passenger’s experience of flight as a journey defined by unrestricted movement. For instance, in a promotional video from 2015, Air France depicted the interior of its air cabin as an expansive space filled with youthful passengers joyfully pendulating back and forth on swings. Indeed, this type of imagery also comprises an aesthetic of movement - though, it is defined by a sense of unrestricted kinaesthesia. In this paper, I consider how the terminal’s aesthetic of ordered movement and the airline industry’s depictions of free kinaesthesia are predicated on normative ideas of mobility and how this discounts people living with disabilities.
Missing My Connection: (An)Aesthetics of Mobility, Aversion and Loss in an Auto-Ethnography of the London Underground

Samuel Mutter
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Abstract

This paper reflects upon auto-ethnographic accounts of London Underground mobilities to contend that, as much as affirmative notions of connection, encounter, or emergence, experiences of public transit are characterised by fluctuating (an)aesthetics of anxiety, loss and aversion.

Faced with falling ridership and financial pressures, London Underground has sought in recent years to make the network more appealing and profitable in part through the cultivation of an accessible and inclusive passenger experience that facilitates efficient mobility, comfort, productivity and entertainment alongside moments of aesthetic and social encounter, joy and surprise. Embodied in these narratives is an affirmative kin-aesthetic promise, that, as we move, we gain something: we soak in the atmosphere, reach out, connect, and grow. Nonetheless, in my auto-ethnographic accounts as a white, male, able-bodied researcher, what persist are fluctuating sensations of loss, aversion, and absence tied up in the failure to extend or sustain connections with differently mobile others.

These insights build upon work in mobilities studies and cultural geography concerning affective (ine)qualities of movement (Bissell, 2016) and the question of ‘negativity’ (Dekeyser et al., 2022), to destabilise the desired affirmative norm of passenger experience against which standards of accessibility and inclusion are measured (Hall & Wilton, 2017).
“It’s more complicated after Covid”. Work-life balance in travel and tourism sector in Tijuana (Mexico)

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Abstract

Covid pandemics have imposed important effects on women’s lives in the Global South (Al-Ali, 2020; Carli, 2020; Mulder, 2020; Silveira Campos et al., 2020). Work-life balance has been among the most relevant due to the increase of care work; however, women’s working on diverse service sector -such as travel and tourism- have seen their income reduced (Ayatakshi-Endow and Steele, 2021; Fonseca et al., 2020; Monterrubio, 2021). Several sectors have been experiencing negative economic impacts due to mobility restrictions; located in the northern Mexican border Tijuana is highly dependent of California economy (Mendoza Cota, 2017), and even if Mexican border did not experienced a rigorous lockdown, its travel and tourism sector has been faced some turmoil since the beginning of the pandemic. An effect that has influenced women’s quotidian life. In this oral communication, we aim to explore women’s responses to care work and paid work during the last two years. We have relied on qualitative methods (In-depth interview and life stories) (Fernández Sánchez and Lopez-Zafra 2019; Thomsen et al., 2016). Our objective is to analyze women’s responses to work-life balance during lockdown (April 2020) and subsequent quotidian life during pandemics (from May, 2020 until October 2021). We will center our regard on a couple of life stories of women working on travel and tourism in Tijuana to explore their strategies to improve work-life balance. Our main conclusions will center on the feminization of work-life strategies in a traditional society, the role of extended family, the need of new strategies to face care work and its impacts on their professional lives.
London Open City: geographies of race, migration and mobility

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Abstract

For urbanists such as Saskia Sassen and Richard Sennett, the open city is incomplete, errant, conflictual, and non-linear. Unlike the closed city, which is full of metaphorical and literal boundaries and walls. This paper explores these dimensions of city life, not as a dichotomy, but as a series of lived problematics, both social and spatial. This paper explores older questions of social cohesion and newer questions of neighbourliness by exploring both the ways that people move back and forward between forms of indifference and community as well as the everyday issues that make a difference to patterns of co-existence and dwelling in the city. It is concerned with the ways that the turbulent micro- and macro-politics of city life enables people to live together.

As a city that is constantly being remade by its inhabitants, as well as experiencing considerable and ongoing development, with pressures on public services and economic resources, London is an exemplary place to examine how people dwell or co-exist and even thrive in the city. In London, constant change affords people the opportunity to make different temporal and spatial claims over belonging to the city. This paper presents research from a case study located on an ordinary estate in the London Borough of Camden. This is contextualised by an analysis of population churn in London as a whole. This enables us to focus on transformations in old and new forms of ethnic and racial difference, and spatial mobility, to address questions of dwelling-together in the city.
The geopolitics of postcolonial diplomatic training: the experience of Algerians in Paris 1962-63

Jonathan Harris
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Abstract
As former colonies gained independence through the second half of the 20th Century, members of their new diplomatic services were often trained at universities and international organisations in the Global North. These training spaces were key sites of knowledge production and diplomatic socialisation in the formative years of diplomats’ careers. They can thus offer insights into how diplomacy was learned, but also reworked and re-imagined from a Global South perspective. This paper focuses on how training provided by France for Algerian diplomatic staff in Paris from 1962 was experienced by the trainees as they sought to find their place in relation to the international community, to their former colonial enemy, and within the city of Paris. It examines how this training reproduced and challenged Western and colonial diplomatic norms, both within and beyond the classroom.
I Stay for You: Impacts of Place Attachment on Remote Learning Experience of University Students Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Location of residences for college students has psychological impacts on their academic performances. Previous studies cited the effects of places on the cognition, emotion, and behavior of people. The goal of the present study was to explore these dynamics by determining place attachment and its relation to remote learning among planning major students in the University of the Philippines Los Baños who were temporary and permanent residents of Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, it aimed to: (1) identify factors affecting their place attachment; (2) determine effects of place attachment on their decision for settlement; and (3) analyze effects of place attachment to their remote learning. The study used online surveys and in-depth interviews while analysis was done through narrative and thematic approaches to highlight the cases. Results revealed that temporary residents sacrificed what permanent residents have gained: material resources, familial care, and protection. Ironically, permanent residents struggled due to family duties and conflicts while temporary residents enjoyed self-expression and independence. Despite the challenges and high cases of COVID-19 in the area, both residents still opted to live in Los Baños because of improved mental health and well-being due to significant memories and emotions attached to parks and green spaces, worship places, institutional and commercial services, support systems, and social capitals. These reminded them of their student life, serving as encouragement to continue with their life struggles and academic endeavors. It is suggested that the place attachment of students in relation to priorities for settlement be explored.
Debating Global Governance: ‘Model UNPO’ role plays in school settings

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Abstract

Simulation and role-play have a proven track record as pedagogic techniques to provide students with insights into geopolitics, diplomacy, and international relations. Since the first Model United Nations in 1947, simulations have proliferated within secondary and tertiary educational settings including exercises that model institutions such as NATO, the EU, and the Arab League. However, these activities overwhelmingly focus on recognised nation states, neglecting polities that are not UN member states, but that are often at the receiving end of civil conflicts, and human rights abuses (e.g., de facto states, stateless nations, exiled governments, and indigenous communities). Over 40 of these polities have come together as the ‘Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization’ (UNPO). These are communities/peoples/nations/territories that are rarely mentioned in school settings, and yet in some cases are communities that students have tangible relationships too. This paper is part of a broader project that is seeking to bring the realities and stories from such communities to a wider audience. Loosely based on Model UN simulations, the ‘Model UNPO’ exercise involves participants being assigned a UNPO member, researching that polity’s context and rights claims, and coming together for a structured role-play debate focused on issues around the right to self-determination. Drawing upon activities with 290 UK secondary and primary students, this paper brings together literature on the geographies of education and learning with work in political geography on the nature of stateness to think about how the geographies of play can help young people to make sense of the contemporary political world. Moreover, we argue that simulations can serve as a participatory method to provide an insight into children’s understandings of geopolitics, which are often underpinned by a focus on the everyday.
After the office: changing spatial organizations of work and home during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

In this paper I explore surveys and interviews with workers in Ontario who had to adjust to (1) working from the home, and (2) additional childcare duties due to school closures, during the COVID-19 pandemic. I focus on working parents in “knowledge” sectors, building on the literature on social reproduction, workplace cultures, and working from home both prior to and since the pandemic. I show how new relations formed in the home as different forms of work (i.e., unpaid social reproduction and paid work for an employer) overlapped in unexpected ways, and how the respective meanings, spatial dynamics, and gendered relations of both work and home changed. I examine the gendered and racialized implications of these shifts in terms of new divisions of labor in the home and new relations with employers, colleagues, and with paid work in general. For some these changes involve a retrenchment of gender norms that will negatively affect women’s careers; for others they offer new opportunities for working differently and a reprieve from discriminatory treatment in the office. While these shifts have demonstrated the uneven viability of working from home, it is still uncertain how this will affect homes and employer-employee relations moving forward. Much is at stake in relation to the agency of workers in sectors that are often ununionized, and, while those workers may have relatively high degrees of status and social power outside of their workplaces, they may not have much decision-making power when it comes to their actual employment circumstances. I explore these changing socio-spatial dynamics, emphasizing the deep complexity of responses and thus the need for a willingness on the part of employers to listen carefully to what employees want and need in the new world of work after the office.
“At least I’ve been around for stuff and actually with them home schooling, I mean we all have lunch together and stuff” - The differential impact of COVID-19 on UK television workers

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Abstract

This paper explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on workers in the UK’s television industry. When the UK Government announced the first stay at home order in March 2020, the TV industry was already in the process of shutting down. Production companies and broadcasters were wary of restrictions so slowed down production timelines and stalled non-essential work. With travel restrictions to countries already under lockdown in place, overseas travel was difficult for cast and crew. Compounding this, production insurance was becoming more expensive or impossible to get.

For an industry dominated by freelance workers who operate on a contract-to-contract basis, frequently only securing their next jobs with a week’s notice, the impact of the lockdown was devastating. Work was cancelled, contracts torn up and future work impossible to secure. This paper explores the ways the long-term structural precarity of the TV industry was exacerbated and the impacts this had on individuals on furlough, those turning to benefits, seeking work outside the industry and returning to live with parents. We examine the ways people replaced face-to-face networking and presentism with new forms of ‘staying in touch’. We illustrate how being unable to work and, more importantly, being unable to look for new work, led many to reflect on their jobs, careers, employment status, domestic circumstances and health for the first time in their careers. We also highlight the differential impact of lockdown across the TV labour force and show who can and who can’t work from home, who could and who couldn’t risk being on set or location, and those for whom little changed. Finally, we reflect on the methodological challenges of interviewing people locked down, while working at home ourselves and without the institutional support structures which make difficult research topics bearable.
Geography, genocide and the making of the international in law

Alex Jeffrey
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Abstract

This paper argues that scrutinising legal deliberations in international courts reveals how the findings and resolutions of such courts are not simply making law, they are stabilising certain understandings of ‘the international’. This argument is made through an examination of the case of The Gambia vs. Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) where The Gambia brought Myanmar to the ICJ for breaches of the UN Genocide Convention to relating to the killing and expulsion of the Rohingya from Rakhine State in western Myanmar. In January 2020 the ICJ supported provisional measures against Myanmar, while preliminary objections against the jurisdiction raised by Myanmar were heard in the court in February 2022. Drawing in interviews with the legal counsel on both sides of this dispute, and analysis of the transcripts of the public hearings, the paper examines the different conceptualisations of the international mobilised within the proceedings: from the enforced statelessness of the Rohingya community, through to the invocation of the responsibilities of humanity in the face of genocidal acts. Studying these differing stances, while setting the case in its complex geopolitical setting, reveals how understandings of ‘the international’ are spatially and historically situated.
Financialisation and local statecraft

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Abstract

Scrutinising accounts of the risky and speculative activities of ‘councillors at the casino’, this paper develops a new theory of local statecraft to explain the financialisation of local government and its implications. It understands local statecraft as underpinned by local statehood and exercised across a variety of realms. Focusing on England as a public sector reform laboratory amidst austerity since 2010, it reveals the differentiated landscape of local statecraft engagements with financialisation across England amongst three groups: the vanguard; less active intermediate; and long tail. Financialisation is unevenly rewiring and rescaling the objectives, incentives, autonomies, and accountabilities of local statecraft and displacing and relocating risks onto local government and the local state. This wider extension and intensification of financialisation exposes the local state’s financial sustainability and resilience in the longer-term.
The rise of the ‘urban debtfare state’

Crispian Fuller\textsuperscript{1}, Mia Gray\textsuperscript{2}

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Abstract

A disciplinary welfare state apparatus characterised by a reduced financial benefits system, accompanied by broader forms of ‘precarious capitalism’, are generating growing levels of public sector debts for citizens. In the UK, the latter is characterised by debts accrued from Council Tax, which is a tax on the domestic properties of residents. As Council Tax increases, there has been a detrimental and disproportionately negative impact on poorer communities, resulting in increasing debts and defaults. For Soederberg (2014), the growth of debt relates to the rise of ‘debtfare’ states regimes, characterised by governance arrangements facilitating an expansion of the reliance of the poor on credit. While Soederberg’s (2014) framework is concerned with private capital’s financialisation of citizens, it does explicate the increasing role of the state in societal debt. This paper expands Soederberg’s analysis to develop the concept of the ‘urban debtfare state’, characterised by a discursive and material urban state apparatus concerned with the collection of citizen debts and the social construction of debtor subjects.

The paper examines the (1) extent to which the rise of this ‘urban state debtfarism’ has become an important feature of city governments; (2) influences on the development, function and form that urban state collection practices take. The paper addresses these issues by utilising the ‘forms of life’ perspective of Rahal Jaeggi (2018), defined as ‘culturally informed orders of existence’ that are ‘problem solving entities’. Forms of life are structured by historically constituted norms, and express and convey these norms through ‘ensembles of social practices’.
Embedding Ethics in Geography: An examination of bringing geospatial ethical frameworks into the classroom.

Doug Specht
University of Westminster, UK

Abstract

The last few years have seen a many discussions around geospatial ethics, and since 2018 multiple ethical frameworks have emerged. UNICEF and the UK Statistics Authority have both produced similarly tilted documents on the Ethical Considerations of using Geospatial technologies or data. The Locus Charter has presented us with 10 guiding ideas on how to be more ethical in our work, and other organisations are presenting similar ideas and publications. There is also discussion about how these documents might impact on the work of people in the geospatial industries, with focus groups, interviews and surveys run by numerous organisations and think tanks to look at how these documents might be being used. Within this remains a gap, education. While there are courses on geospatial ethics available, some free through online platforms, some as part of university courses, these remain on the periphery and often require individuals or companies to ‘add-on’ ethics as part of their training or staff development. This session will draw upon work with secondary school students to look at how we can use the numerous frameworks developed to teach geospatial ethics as part of the geography curriculum. Furthermore, this talk will examine what can be learned from these integrations for the better inclusion of ethical learning inside organisations. The many frameworks that have been produced are an incredibly important step in increasing our ethical use of geospatial data and technology, but without a fully developed educational strand they risk being marginalised, forgotten about or merely used to ethics-wash poor practice.
Planning for equitable emergency health care: Assessing the geography of ambulance provision and demand in Sweden

Jacob Hassler\textsuperscript{1}, Vania Ceccato\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}KTH Department of Urban planning and Environment, Sweden. \textsuperscript{2}KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden

Abstract

In this presentation, we present two examples of methods applied to assess the geography of ambulance provision and demand in Sweden. The first example was concerned with investigating potential spatial and socioeconomic disparities in accessibility to emergency health care using network analysis in a GIS and modelling. Findings indicate that there are spatial and sociodemographic disparities in access to emergency health care in Sweden, both between urban and rural areas and between sociodemographic groups. Moreover, current practice of measuring ambulance response times may obscure poor potential disparities in accessibility. In the second example, cluster analyses and spatial modelling techniques were employed to study how ambulance demand vary spatially and temporally. Daily routines, dictating the spatial relocation of populations in the day, explain variations in demand to some degree and both demographic and land use factors can also be helpful in explaining such variations.
Consuming geopolitics and feeling maritime territoriality: the case of China’s patriotic tourism in the South China Sea

Yan Huang
Griffith University, Australia

Abstract

Territorial disputes in and over the South China Sea (SCS) are often regarded as a dangerous flashpoint in the Indo-Pacific with potentially serious global consequences. In the context of this territorial rivalry, tourism has been deployed by several littoral countries as a soft, civilian tactic to territorialising the sea. This research moves away from a state-centric focus to explore the process and effect of tourism in maritime territorial socialisation by investigating China’s tourism in the SCS. The research demonstrates the mutual constitution of tourism and maritime territorialisation. It shows that tourism is playing an increasingly important role in everyday contexts to socialise individuals into national-territorial thinking and to affect broad geopolitical subjectivation. As such, I suggest that tourism should be seen as a mundane and intimate way in which people regularly live and enact geopolitics. However, tourism alone does not decidedly stoke strong territorial nationalism, instead it produces uneven bordering or territorialisation effects at the personal level. Actual tourism practices, tourist agency, and the distinct wet ontology of the sea complicate the state maritime territorialisation process. Furthermore, this study provides a timely intervention to see the Chinese public’s opinions and emotional stakes on the SCS. It finds that there is not a uniform or strong territorial nationalism among tourists and the Chinese tourists are pragmatic, calculative geopolitical actors. The tourists’ geopolitics experiences through tourism and their defence of China’s maritime territoriality are connected to, and embedded in, their daily extensive perceptions and embodied experiences of China’s rising and of the unjust international orders on handling territorial disputes, while also informed by official territorial practices and traditional political culture. By examining the intimate entanglement of tourism in maritime territorialisation, this research contributes to scholarship on tourism geopolitics, state (maritime) territorialisation, territorial nationalism, and the SCS disputes.
Exploring the use of remote sensing data to detect criminogenic urban features: The case of Stockholm, Sweden

Ioannis Ioannidis\textsuperscript{1}, Vania Ceccato\textsuperscript{2}, Andreas Nascetti\textsuperscript{2}, Robert Haining\textsuperscript{3}

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Abstract

The criminological literature has long indicated that features of physical environment can encourage acts of crime. Therefore, in this study, we assess whether physical characteristics of the urban environment, extracted from remote sensing data, are associated with crime levels and patterns. Using Stockholm, the capital of Sweden as area of study, we test three different indices: Index of the built up environment and a vegetation index (NDVI) extracted from Sentinel 2A satellite and an index of the building heights from LiDAR system. We study those indices in connection to two main categories of crimes: street crimes and residential burglaries, as they are often associated with distinct configurations of the urban environment. Spatial analyses using Geographical information system (GIS) and spatial modelling underlie the methodology employed in the study. In this presentation, we report the preliminary results and discuss the next steps of the study.
Using crowdsourced geodata in policing: Opportunities and challenges.

Vania Ceccato\textsuperscript{1}, Robin Petersson\textsuperscript{1}, Reka Solymosi\textsuperscript{2}, Oskar Muller\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}KTH Department of Urban planning and Environment, Sweden. \textsuperscript{2}University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

Adopting a spatial perspective to geographical information, we discuss in this presentation the nature of information sharing in social media by those involved in policing. We report results from two Swedish studies to reflect upon the opportunities and challenges of information sharing via Twitter by police officers and other local actors involved in crime prevention and/or emergency services. The first study examines the content of Tweets in urban and rural contexts from a sample of police-related Twitter accounts, comparing official and personal accounts active. The second study investigates the nature of information sharing in social media about missing persons by using social media data. Findings indicate that the value of information shared by social media as a problem-solving resource might have so far been overestimated. Both studies call for a discussion of new models of police engagement using social media by a society that is increasingly shaped by the internet.
Using multiple data sources to produce an AI safety perception map of the city of Stockholm, Sweden

Jonatan Abraham\textsuperscript{1}, Vania Ceccato\textsuperscript{1}, Fabio Duarte\textsuperscript{2}, Per Näsman\textsuperscript{1}, Yuhao Kang\textsuperscript{3}, Fan Zhang\textsuperscript{2}

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate whether and how safety patterns relate to elements of the physical and social landscape of Stockholm municipality, using an AI-model and a variety of other methods and data sources. The methodology includes a survey where respondents are asked to rank the safety of Street View images, allowing the perceived safety of a number of places in Stockholm to be quantified into a safety score. This information is in turn used to train an AI-model which is later utilized to predict the safety perceptions of completely new Stockholm locations. The AI-produced safety scores are compared with those indicators coming from a number of other urban security indicators serving as a ‘ground truth’ (e.g. data from victimization surveys, police records). In this presentation, we will present preliminary findings of this ongoing study.
State rescaling through finance: The case of British local governments before and after the Covid-19 pandemic

Hulya Dagdeviren
University of Hertfordshire, UK

Abstract

Recurring crises in advanced capitalist economies have led to state rescaling exercises with critical consequences for local governments. A prolific literature has addressed the associated dynamics through various frameworks, including local entrepreneurialism, financialised governance, austerity urbanism and re-municipalisation. This study re-examines the process of state-rescaling in the context of British Local Governments’ experiences between the 2008 crisis and the Covid-19 crisis, primarily engaging with political economy and economic geography perspectives. Focusing on financial strategies of over 300 local governments, it is argued that the centralised controls prior to 2008 and the austerity programme afterwards influenced their choices in the recent years and resulted in a peculiar form of state rescaling with costly outcomes for a significant number of municipal authorities in the post pandemic period.
Speculative Geographies of the Far Future: Planetary Ruination in the Dying Earth Subgenre.

James Lowder
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

Through the use of textual analysis this paper engages with Jack Vance’s The Dying Earth (1950) and Songs of the Dying Earth: Stories in Honour of Jack Vance (2009), an anthology edited by George R. R. Martin and Gardner Dozois. By turning attention to these fantastical texts, this paper investigates the exhausted ecosystems, dilapidated societies, and crumbling architectures of the Dying Earth subgenre. At a time when diverse academic thought is increasingly applying geological understandings of the Anthropocene and deep time (Clark, 2014), this piece draws attention to parallels between this subgenre’s speculative visions and recent conceptualisations of the Anthropocene as ruin. Particular focus is given to highlighting the similarities between these imaginative far futures and notions of the Anthropocene as a ‘ruined Earth’ (Beuret and Brown, 2017), whilst unpacking how both resonate with suggestions that “the ruin is in fact the ontological condition of our planet” (Pohl, 2020: 82). Additionally, central themes of entropy and fragility are considered, especially their role in defining the landscapes of Dying Earth fiction. Overall, this paper argues that in imagining these ruinous futures, such narratives open up space for a critical engagement with the Anthropocene and its destructive consequences, highlighting the importance of fantastic texts in constructing popular perceptions of Earth’s future and their significance in framing the finitude of our planetary milieu.
The financialising univer[city]? Financial restructuring and real estate investment in UK higher education

Luke Green
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This paper seeks to understand the changing financial strategies of higher education institutions in the UK over the past two decades, in the context of shifting funding and regulatory settlements and a dramatic upswing in speculative forms of real estate development across the sector. Through offering detailed empirical evidence from two “critical” cases at the vanguard of financialisation in UK higher education—the Universities of Edinburgh (Scotland) and Manchester (England)—the paper analyses precisely why these universities invest in and develop real estate in the ways that they do. More specifically, it first traces the changing financial strategies and the elevation of real estate concerns at both universities over the past two decades, showing the ways in which finance-led growth and real estate investment have been leveraged by them to secure their financial futures and advance their positions within a deeply turbulent higher education marketplace. Second, the paper then “follows the money” to explain precisely how Edinburgh and Manchester have funded and financed their growth strategies, arguing that both institutions engage with capital and real estate markets and city partners in highly nuanced, selective, and adaptive ways in response to specific (urban) financial conjunctures. As such, the paper demonstrates the mutually constitutive relation between the financial restructuring of higher education institutions and their urban landscapes. In so doing, it brings attention to the politically tangled, strategically haphazard and oftentimes contentious nature of university real estate development—and the correspondingly uneven, contingent, and disrupted character of financialising in higher education.
Financing elite education: economic capital and the maintenance of class power in English private schools

Sol Gamsu
Durham University, UK

Abstract

The relationship of elite schools to economic capital is central to understanding the maintenance of their cultural power and institutional longevity. Since Glennerster and Wilson’s (1970) analysis, there has been little analysis of how private schools in England manage their wealth or how they are differentiated hierarchically by the composition and scale of the capital they hold. Research has explored the financing of elite universities (Spencer 2005; Piketty, 2014), with less attention on schools (James, Boden and Kenway Forthcoming). Using detailed Charities Commission financial data, I examine the finances of 216 English private schools in the Head Masters’ Conference association. The analysis entails a Principal Components Analysis followed by a Hierarchical Clustering on the Principal Components to reveal the economic hierarchy amongst elite schools in England. I then draw on the schools’ published accounts to examine this hierarchy further. These analyses show how the economic field of elite schools is dominated by just five schools with almost unassailable levels of wealth in property, investments and fees. Beneath them sit a wealthy group with smaller capital holdings and more diverse incomes including lucrative satellite campuses in Asia. These wealthier schools are largely boarding schools located in southern England. The provincial day schools of northern England and less prestigious boarding schools have much lower incomes and almost total reliance on tuition fees. Proximity to and control over capital allow schools to maintain their dominance, underlining how the material basis for elite cultural and class power in and over education is ultimately economic.
New municipalism and local agency: building resistance to the brutality of local authority financialisation

Alan Southern
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

The ‘financialisation’ of UK local government has been a long process. The move since the 1980s, from local government to local governance is normalised and accepted without question. Central has been the hollowed out state: privatisation changed the shape of political/administrative structures; public employment became private and trade union influence declined; markets took priority over citizens and boosterist capital ventures were underpinned by the state. Local governance became part of a broader shift for the public sector that enabled financial sector influence over the work of local authorities. This manifest in examples of local councils using high risk market loans and expressed itself more clearly in the brutality of local communities experiencing constant decline in the provision of collective services. The drive towards so-called financial ‘innovation’ by local authorities has been geographically diffuse and has added to the socialisation of risk and privatisation of reward.

An alternative is to consider local agency. Communities and trade unions do not stand-by as victims, but seek to organise and educate against the severity of reduced public services and increasingly exploitative practices to access individualised private provision. We draw on a response in the Liverpool City Region where to support the social economy, a new community-owned social finance/investment vehicle has been launched with the potential to democratise parts of the local economy and offer provision to those parts of the city region where the market has failed and the state has withdrawn. This, as part of a wider movement, shows how opportune it is to consider what resistance can be built as the global processes behind local authority financialisation intensify. We posit ideas about new municipalism and search for answers to a crisis of political economic accountability, and what appears to be a qualitative shift in the current neoliberal landscape formulates.
Co-creating visions of complex urban heat systems: exploring participatory methods

Sumedha Basu
University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

It is evident from recent studies and policy prescriptions that a successful energy transition in the UK will be contingent upon the successful implementation of place-based energy responses and equitable participation from local communities. On the other hand, energy systems are increasingly being conceptualised and modelled as complex systems – interconnected and interdependent on not just other technological and natural systems but also social systems. As energy systems and their governance mechanisms are scaled downwards, the complexity only increases as societal networks, politics, behavioural, democratic, and equitable aspects demand attention. How can this complexity be understood or leveraged for ensuring a just and inclusive energy transition that is both historically and geographically informed but also agile to future climatic and political uncertainties? How can this complexity be made accessible to policymakers, often falling short of capacities for navigating these radical and complex changes? We propose that envisioning urban energy systems through participatory methods as complex system imaginaries and imageries can potentially address some of these challenges. Focussing on urban heat decarbonisation in the UK, this paper will present a literature review of participatory approaches to complex systems modelling, identify the gaps from the perspective of urban energy transitions, and suggest ideas and methods to co-create visions of complex urban energy systems with wide-ranging urban energy stakeholders. The vision created will serve as the foundation for a larger project that aims to co-produce complex systems based frameworks, tools and models to help policymakers undertake long-term sustainable energy planning, plural energy pathways, and contingent decisions that can facilitate the decarbonisation of urban heat systems and bring about a just societal transformation.
Time loss disaster and recovery in Tehran: the ongoing production of mobility practice and space through coping with everyday (im)mobility situations

Sara Mesgarpour Tousi
Technical University of Berlin, Germany

Abstract

Although many disasters emerge rapidly having very short-term intensive consequences, there are some threatening phenomena, like climate change, which is a gradual and ongoing process without an explicit beginning and end. In this regard, this paper focuses on “time loss” as a dominant crisis within everyday mobility practices and investigates how its transformation into a disaster in individuals’ life directs people to very different ways of coping and resistance. This work is part of a qualitative research on everyday mobility practice in Tehran. Data collection was performed, in 2019-20, through 52 semi-structured qualitative interviews with individuals from different socio-economic status, 21 expert interviews with authorities in transport institutions as well as three months of observation in the field. The main question is how people and authorities, from the bottom and up, have a different level of understanding and implicit knowledge about time loss as a temporal crisis or a long-term disaster within everyday mobility practices. This study addresses how time loss in (im)mobility situations is related to other dimensions of resource consumption (energy and cost) and the notions of health and safety. The result shows that time loss may be understood in relation to “livelihood”, “efficiency”, “welfare” and “right” and this relation is the main point of differentiation in shaping individuals’ tendency to deal with time loss disaster in their everyday life. “Recovery” concept in this study refers to everyday individual and structural dealing with challenging (im)mobility situations by applying informal or social solutions which result in reconfiguration of mobility space and practice. This work does not address recovery after time loss disaster, but these two notions are interconnected in everyday life and considered as one way of persistence and sustaining in everyday extreme (im)mobility situations.
Where might the metaphor ‘natural capital’ be misleading us? “Not everything that counts can be counted.” (Cameron, 1963)

Nigel Cooper
Anglia Ruskin University, UK. Diocese of Ely, UK

Abstract

The noun phrase ‘natural capital’ has become popular amongst people arguing for better protection of nature in a world that seems governed by financial decisions. “If it is not counted, it won’t count,” summarises the position its proponents. By framing nature within a financial schema this metaphor does have considerable rhetorical force, as is explained by cognitive linguistics (George Lakoff in particular). However, the outcome of that rhetoric may be ambivalent where the connotations of the metaphor are not well aligned with the nature of Nature.

Some of these misalignments will be explored (and illustrated by a Critical Discourse Analysis of the Dasgupta Report on the Economics of Biodiversity, 2021). i) Financially, a capital is one element within an account; contrast the claim that the economy lies within nature. ii) Capital assumes that a corporate body or individual has title to it and can sell it on, while much of the natural world is not currently owned by anyone. iii) Capital goods are normally fungible with others via financial capital, what then of critical natural capital? iv) Although capital goods come in many shapes and sizes, once conceptualised as capital they become mathematically identical, whereas the particularity of nature is of its essence. This particularity can be viewed from a science-perspective, such as the uniqueness of a species or site, or from the point of view of the humanities, such as the individuality and relationality of places and individual organisms (e.g. trees). v) Because of this singularity and other reasons, marginal changes in nature are non-linear and scale-dependent; but economics is the mathematics of the margin and calculus.

The misalignment may lead to sub-optimal decisions because the conception of a mathematical model omits so much information and it does not sit with the complexity of much human decision-making.
Natural Capital accounting depletes Whole Place Capital: A diagnosis of the threat and a proposal to address it.

Ewan Allinson
Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee, Kenya

Abstract

By valuing landscapes in terms of Natural Capital, it has become possible for high finance to gain a foothold within nature conservation, land ownership & management in ways that were previously unthinkable. Given that this introduces a new and very dynamic driver of change into places worldwide, it becomes a matter of urgency to diagnose the impacts and injustices that are being triggered by this change and to intervene against those with a Whole Place approach.

I will provide case studies of rural communities facing real threats to their sustainability as a result of the green-rush. Investors need alerting to these collateral impacts because their investments could be put at risk by the depletion of the social, cultural and intellectual capital embedded in rural communities, much of which underpins some of the best of the natural capital. Natural Capital’s ascendancy has us not seeing the wood for the trees.

What I will propose, through gritted teeth, is the idea of Whole Place Capital, which includes the value of the social, cultural and intellectual capital carried by rural communities, forms of value that are intertwined with the fortunes of the Natural Capital.

Why gritted teeth? Because as an artist, writer and leader of award-winning place-based rural partnerships, I deplore the language of natural capital and ecosystem services. Their usefulness in convincing markets is evident but that does not mean that they then have to dominate all valuing discourse. I will draw upon environmental ethics writers to broaden that discourse.

In the spirit of rapprochement, I will draw upon testimonial evidence from my recent lottery-funded arts project with hill farmers in the North Pennines to suggest the contours of an accounting schema by which Social, Cultural and Intellectual Capital could join Natural Capital on the Whole Place Capital spreadsheet.
The layering of managerial, entrepreneurial and financialized logics in urban governance: the case of water company Farys

Laura Deruytter
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

Abstract

In urban and economic geography, new concepts have emerged to grasp contemporary transformations, such as financialized entrepreneurialism (Beswick and Penny, 2018), entrepreneurial municipalism (Thompson et al., 2020), and new urban managerialism (Phelps and Miao, 2020). While these concepts are insightful, they tend to subsume governing practices under one ‘dominant’ mode of governance. At risk is that the actually existing, overlapping and contradictory tendencies are left unexplained. Engaging with the work of Pike et al. (2019), this paper calls to take seriously their notion of ‘mixing and mutating’ forms of governance. By adopting an actor-oriented, conjunctural perspective and by recovering the concept of ‘layering’ (Massey, 1984; Peck, 1998; Streeck and Thelen, 2005), I seek to conceptualize the co-existence, in one conjuncture, of managerial, entrepreneurial and financialized logics. The case study of Farys, a water company owned by multiple municipalities in Flanders, operationalizes this approach. From the 2000s onwards, Farys diversified its services to shareholding municipalities, from delivering essential goods, to large-scale sewerage provision and more economical management of sport and leisure facilities. Municipalities thereby mobilize Farys in an entrepreneurial search for cost-cutting, budgetary rewards and local growth, as well as in adopting financialized techniques such as circumventing debt constraints and bringing future revenues into to present. At the same time, the arrangement with Farys allows municipalities to pursue managerial rationales, such as increased investment, operational know-how and public control. Building on these findings, I seek to stimulate research on the conjunctural interaction between structural tendencies and local agency in creating ‘layered’ policies. While I show this for Flanders – a region marked by consensus-seeking political traditions – the layering of governance logics might also inform Anglo-American cases.
Weird Geographies: Vandermeer, Harrison and Miéville

Gwilym Eades
Royal Holloway University of London, UK

Abstract

This paper takes one particular form of mapping, the Venn diagram, as a way of theorising weird geographies. Examples from literature are used as a data source for the production of qualitative commentary on fantasy, science fiction, and horror as the sub-genres to be included in the diagram. This generic ‘fantastika’ is explored through texts by Miéville, Harrison, and Vandermeer each of whom is posited as occupying two of three positions in the Venn mapping. This mapping is itself shown to be a metaphorical construct for exploring the question of how the weird can be applied to specifically geographical problems and to the question of the relevance of the weird for geographical inquiry. The discussion and conclusion both summarise a variety of applications of the weird for geographical boundary crossings, critical category hybridising in a time of climate change, and creative thinking in speculating Anthropocene futures.
Rural electrification and transformation in Rwanda: Analysing sociomaterial flows of the dairy value chain and its welfare impact

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Abstract

In low-income countries, investments in modern energy systems are required to address the electricity gap in the economic periphery. Historical studies evidence that rural electrification contributes to rural transformation. This change, however, is prone to regional differences. There are two schools of thought that provide different explanations for how electrification enables rural transformation: the “pro-agriculture group” and the “Industrialists” that emphasise as the main driving force rural electrification or urban industrialisation respectively. Nevertheless, this study understands cities and rural areas as interlinked through sociomaterial flows. It examines how the introduction of electricity in the countryside supports rural transformation through the dairy value chain in Rwanda. It maps the flows and locations of milk collection centres (MCCs), processing units, and retail points, and identifies factors that enable or hamper the dairy value chain to contribute to rural transformation. Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to quantify spatial differences in sociomaterial flows from 2010 to 2020. Qualitative interviews are used to explain differences in sociomaterial flows with factors and practices that contribute to differences in rural transformation. Preliminary findings show that since 2010, electricity supply to MCCs has led to the expansion of MCCs in rural area, and increase in dairy products flows from the countryside to cities. It is expected that the quality of electricity supply and lack of training, managerial skills and institutional support limit the dairy value chain ability to contribute to access to finance, assets, diversification of income and increase in social status of value chain actors.
Adventures in ‘Wilderness’, Frontier Narratives and the construction of a sense of belonging among conservation practitioners in the Manu National Park, Peru

Eduardo Salazar Moreira
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Abstract

The remote forests of the Manu river basin, in the Peruvian Amazon, hold record-breaking levels of biodiversity and have been historically inhabited by several Indigenous communities. Nonetheless, the richness of the non-human elements of Manu’s ecosystems led to the discursive construction of this space as a ‘pristine wilderness’ where nature without people could be studied to facilitate the ‘restoration’ of disturbed areas of Amazonia. This is the contradiction upon which the Manu National Park was established and is still a major element in its management, as well as the source of its most significant dilemmas. Understanding the meaning that this place has for conservation practitioners will allow me to comprehend how they make sense of this complex situation and work towards their vision of the future of this conservation space. Through a Political Ecology framework, my doctoral thesis clarifies how the notion of ‘wilderness’ continues to be a crucial element in conservation practice, and in the often unjust power relations this practice implies. I have achieved this by applying critical discourse analysis to online interviews, documents, media and participants’ photographs, as well as reflections from my experience as a conservation practitioner in Manu.

In this chapter, I explore how conservation practitioners interpret their ‘adventures’ in the ‘wilderness’ of Manu as frontier narratives. These interpretations highlight the ‘progress’ generated by conservation, the ‘heroism’ of conservation practitioners, the ‘sacredness’ of this exceptional landscape and the construction of a sense of belonging. Simultaneously, many of these narratives downplay and problematize the role of Indigenous peoples, suggesting that the construction of a sense of belonging among conservation practitioners can be an element in the discursive displacement of Manu’s Indigenous communities. Diverging narratives, conversely, express understandings that seek the recovery of the Manu National Park from these exclusionary conditions.

Al James
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This paper explores the gendered dynamics of working on digital labour platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Millions of women worldwide find paid work through digital labour platforms, many with the hope of achieving better reconciliation of paid work with childcare and family. Yet women’s work-lives remain marginalised within the expansive digital labour research agenda. As part of a growing feminist digital labour geographies agenda, this paper presents new evidence from original interviews with 63 women in the UK using a range of popular remote crowdwork platforms during COVID-19 (including PeoplePerHour, Upwork, TaskRabbit, Freelancer). The analysis makes three contributions. First, it documents women’s varied and changing experiences of juggling online crowdwork with homeschooling and childcare over the course of successive COVID-19 lockdowns. Second, it exposes multiple precarities and hardships experienced by women crowdworkers during COVID-19, including gendered exclusions from government furlough protections, self-employed worker support grants, and platform protections – these rooted in discontinuous income histories and previous periods of maternity and childcare. Third, it identifies coping tactics that women platform workers developed to reduce their vulnerabilities and effect improvements in their lockdown work-lives, albeit without necessarily challenging larger structures of constraint at the level of platform architectures, and unequal household divisions of labour. The analysis suggests that COVID-19 lockdown effectively re-inscribed existing online gendered labour market inequalities of working hours, income precarity, and algorithmic visibility. The wider implications of these findings for theorising ‘digital labour’ in the platform economy are examined, as part of a more progressive post-COVID19 economic recovery.
Financialization and structural adjustment at the level of the local state: An everyday perspective on policy implementation in Mexican cities

Hanna Hilbrandt
Universität Zürich, Switzerland

Abstract

In the past decade, research on the financialization of the local state has discussed how cities are pushed to become ‘market ready’ to fund infrastructure projects at scale (Pike et al. 2019; Anguelov, 2020). Scholars focusing on these processes in cities of the global South, have noted that global efforts to push the financialization of Southern municipalities revive the legacies of structural adjustment policies, as they advance investment possibilities in and of cities through municipal reform (Hilbrandt & Grubbauer, 2020, Bigger & Webber, 2020). But while research evidences an increasing set of initiatives by multilateral banks, city networks and development actors promoting such municipal structural adjustment, the actual regulatory, social and material effects of these attempts in advancing the financialization of the state at the urban scale remain open to debate.

This paper discusses how processes of local state financialization and municipal structural adjustment play out in everyday policy practice in Mexican cities. Through a relational theorization of the ‘making-of’ policy processes (Shore and Wright, 1997; Dobson, 2020), it unpicks the power relations through which a network of state, development and private financial actors shape local governance. Empirically, this discussion focuses on the everyday hurdles these actors experience in the implementation of a PPP-project concerning a landfill in the city of Naucalpan (Mexico). Based on interviews with city officials, global development initiatives, and financial actors, I show that despite difficulties and strains for this project to come about, it provides and avenue through which legal and institutional reform is negotiated at national and local scale.
School Choice and the Polarization of Public Schools in a Global City: A Bourdieusian GIS Approach

Ee-Seul Yoon
University of Manitoba, Canada

Abstract

Over the past three decades, urban sociologists have shed light on the intensifying social inequality between the wealthiest and poorest neighborhoods in global cities; yet, limited research has been done to illuminate the relationships between urban polarization and school choice (i.e., where parents choose schools for their children). This study sociospatially examines the patterns of secondary school choice in the global city of Toronto in Canada to illuminate the relationship between urban polarization and school choice. In doing so, this study combines Pierre Bourdieu’s sociospatial theory with a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) approach. Overall, we find that popular schools and schools with specialized choice programs tend to be located in high-status neighborhoods, defined as neighborhoods with above-average levels of income, wealth, education, and representation from the dominant culture. We also note that mobile students who choose “popular” schools or “highly sought-after” specialized programs tend to come from advantaged neighborhoods. Meanwhile, local students who choose a regular school in their neighborhood tend to concentrate in low-status neighborhoods. We conclude that school choice reinforces vertical hierarchy, rather than horizontal diversity, in Toronto. With a new interdisciplinary approach, this study advances a more spatialized understanding of how social inequality accounts for school choice and stratification.
Social network analysis methods and the geography of education: regional divides and elite circuits in the school to university transition in the UK

Sol Gamsu¹, Michael Donnelly²
¹Durham University, UK. ²University of Bath, UK

Abstract

This paper uses social network analysis methods to explore how the spatial mobility of students to attend university creates regional divisions and socio-spatial hierarchies of schools and universities. Using community detection methods as our methodological lens we stitch together regional economic geography, the student mobilities literature and the sociological and geographical analysis of elite education. Combining this statistical technique with qualitative data from our broader study, we explore student flows between different geographical areas in the UK for university. The clusters or ‘communities’ of areas underline how student migration to attend university in the UK is a moment which reflects and re-creates regional and national boundaries. The second part of the paper examines school to university student flows, highlighting a distinctive, predominantly English cluster of elite schools and universities. Examining student mobility patterns with network methods allows us to distinguish a distinctive archipelagic geography of elite formation through higher education.
British elite private schools and their overseas branches: unexpected actors in the global education industry.

Tristan Bunnell, Aline Courtois, Michael Donnelly
University of Bath, UK

Abstract

Our paper examines the opening of branches overseas (‘satellite colleges’) by elite private schools mainly located in England (‘founding colleges’), largely in emerging economies of the Middle East and South East Asia. We trace the development of these ‘satellite colleges’ over three successive waves of growth, from opportunistic venturing in Thailand in the late-1990s to their recent rapid growth in numbers in a phase characterized by the market entry of new actors and geographic diversification. We argue that the emergence of these schools occurs in line with the continued intensification and diversification of the Global Education Industry. This implies a significant shift in the modes of legitimation on which British elite schools typically rely.
Exploring the geography of school hierarchies with social space analysis - The case of academic track enrolment in Swedish upper secondary education

Håkan Forsberg
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Abstract

Swedish education has undergone a substantial transformation the last thirty years, converting from one of the world’s most centralised school systems to a school choice market characterized by de-regulation, privatization, marketization, and commodification. Concurrently to this process, evidence from research shows increasing social, ethnic, and meritocratic differences between schools in both compulsory and upper secondary education. In the latter, this development has led to an extensive supply of academic and vocational tracks within various types of schools, especially in metropolitan areas. Hence, the increased importance of social and meritocratic school hierarchies reflects families’ educational trajectories.

This paper explores how the geography of hierarchies between schools with academic tracks unfolds in the social space of Swedish upper secondary education. The social space analysis is carried out with geometric data analysis (GDA) and draws on individual register data on all students in Swedish upper secondary education, together with information on their parents’ income, education, ethnic background, and where they live. Findings show that Swedish students’ academic track enrolment is subjected to social and geographical inequalities related to the spatial distribution of students’ acquired and inherited assets, such as school performance and parents’ education and income. These inequalities underscore the general process of educational capital allocation to urban areas.


From rural to urban: Changing dynamics among Swedish elite schools?

Eric Larsson, Petter Sandgren
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Abstract

During the last couple of years elite education has been discussed more openly in Sweden. Increasing social differences and privatization of public welfare has spurred such a discussion. Not least, the intensive marketization of Swedish education with free-schools and school choice policies. This development goes against much of the post war efforts to create an egalitarian state and limiting the boundaries between different social groups. For example, restricting privately managed welfare institutions, making the number of private schools nearly non-existent by the early 1990’s. The number of privately managed free-schools have increased manifold since the 1990’s and today cater education to large portion of Swedish elementary, secondary and upper secondary students. This also means an amplified competition between schools to attract students. Several scholars have analysed the consequences of this upsurge of educational marketization and the effects of competition. However, most of these studies have focused on segregation from “below” and little research has been done on elite schools and elite education.

In our presentation we explore the geographies of Swedish upper-secondary elite schools in two steps. First, we focus on the historical and contemporary struggles of Swedish boarding schools. Especially, why these schools have a harder time competing for students. Secondly, we pay attention to the centrally placed inner-city elite schools and elite schools located in the urban areas of Stockholm. Here we explore the strategies deployed by students and elite schools, emphasising the contrasts to Swedish boarding schools. As a part of this analysis, we also look at how students from these elite schools transition in to prestigious Swedish universities. Drawing on a Bourdieusian perspective, we combine a wide array of data. This include interviews, ethnographic observations, secondary statistics, historical documents, matriculations registers and web pages.
Space, place and ritual: The micro-practices of elite formation at an independent boys’ school in England.

Emma Taylor
London School of Economics, UK

Abstract

This paper will draw upon initial findings from long-term ethnographic doctoral research to provide a localised account of the distinct micro-practices of elite formation and (re)production taking place within an elite independent boys’ school in England. I seek to show the ways in which meanings are inextricably bound with a locality to create an environment in which the students become furnished with a particular form of embodied interactional knowledge or capital that is so valued by elite institutions as well as wider society. I argue that specific attachments to place as well as the production of meaning and belonging are linked to repeated forms of performativity through ritual that occur upon and within the given architectural stage of the school space. I will use my findings to reflect on the propulsive power of the elite school in England, where recent research has clearly demonstrated that such an education can play a key role in enabling students to access elite higher education institutions and subsequent influential or so-called ‘top jobs’ in society.
Hidden in plain sight? The geography of elite schools in Ireland.

Aline Courtois
University of Bath, UK

Abstract

Based on a study conducted in Ireland (Courtois, 2018), the paper discusses the role of space and place in the construction and expression of eliteness in the Irish context. The postcolonial narrative, and the paucity of statistical data, have traditionally made conversations about elite education difficult in Ireland. Thus Irish elite schools remain ‘hidden in plain sight’; which makes their mapping a challenging exercise. While acknowledging the importance of global perspectives and methodologies in research on elite education, the paper makes the case for approaches that account for local specificities, spatial dynamics, and rapid changes in the interconnected local, regional and national fields of elite education.

The paper tackles two related sets of questions: First, does the location of elite Irish schools reflect historically rooted spatial dynamics of power, as is the case in larger countries (Cookson and Persell 1985; Gaztambide-Fernández’s 2009)? How do international, national and local dynamics intersect to produce elite status in the Irish context? Second, how do Irish elite schools occupy space (Angod and Gaztambide-Fernández 2019)? How do their spatial and physical characteristics (urban/rural; visible/hidden; gated/open) help shape elite identities and class relations in Ireland?
Formations of race, class and empire: histories of slavery and racism in elite schools in the UK.

Justice Aina, Sol Gamsu
Durham University, UK

Abstract

Elite schools in the UK are bound to the history of the British Empire. In this paper we examine the material ties between these schools and the slave trade. We combine a range of sources to examine which educational institutions and their alumni have substantial economic and cultural links to slavery. We find two principal forms of connection, firstly through the sources of income of boys attending the schools and secondly in donations and foundations of schools using income from the slave trade. Drawing on data from the Legacies of British Slavery dataset we show that the schools with the largest numbers of alumni benefitting from the slave trade are the most traditionally prestigious boys private schools. This aligns with accounts suggesting that plantation owners in the Caribbean frequently educated their sons at major private schools (Williams, 1944). To trace the links between founders and private schools we examine the histories of several secondary schools that were either founded by or received substantial donations from slave-owning families. Combining these histories we provide a theorization of the relationship between elite education, class formation and slavery. We argue that exploitative and violent forms of capital accumulation have been and remain central to the formation and maintenance of elite educational institutions.
Geographies of graduate migration, universities and escalator regions

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Abstract

In this paper we examine how graduate migration to ‘escalator’ regions relates to graduates’ geographic origin and the university attended. In Britain, the theory of regional ‘escalator’ has been central to thinking about the spatial differences in career trajectories as well as local labor markets. The concept of ‘escalator regions’ remains central to current debates about regional inequality and social mobility (Fielding, 1992; Champion and Gordon, 2021). In this paper we build on recent work that has examined the role of particular geographical areas combines with higher education attendance to provide advantages for social mobility (Wielgoszewska, 2018; DfE, 2019; Davies et al. 2021). Recent decades there have been considerable declines in internal migration intensities (Champion et al., 2018), obtaining a degree and then entering the labor market is still considered to be a main driver of regional migration. Making use of graduate data from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), we run a series of multilevel regression models to compare the heterogeneities in the effects that home districts and university attended place on graduate movement to an ‘escalator’ region for employment. Following Fielding (1992;1995), we define London and Southeast England as the key regional ‘escalator’, the results indicate considerable variations existing among districts and universities simultaneously.
First-mile transport emissions in coffee Supply Chain: Contrasting carbon footprint measurement tools and experiences in rural Colombia

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Abstract

Measuring the carbon footprint of the transportation carried out by coffee growers in the first stage of the supply chain has been little studied. In the search for a contribution to the competitiveness of coffee supply chains, the analysis of the first mile is of great value since it is the stage most vulnerable to market volatility and climatic changes. Although there are tools that allow the calculation of the carbon footprint during the product’s entire life cycle, these tools have been generated in developed countries where the geographic, meteorological, and physical infrastructure characteristics are different from Colombia. In this country, the study is being carried out. Applying a questionnaire to coffee growers in the region of Santuario, Risaralda, it was found that most of them use JEEPS automobiles that provide the public service of transporting personnel or cargo to the town. Hiring a car for direct transportation from the farm to the town, or vice versa, is done to transport inputs and, in some cases, for the coffee harvest. Based on this, the methodology of semi-structured interviews is applied to understand the scope of transportation and thus contrast the coffee harvest emissions when coffee growers opt to use shared transportation versus when they use their cars. In this way, the work tries to answer how much first-mile vehicle is relevant in the construction of the carbon footprint of the coffee supply chain and makes a critical review of the existing tools.
Ethnic School Segregation across Space and Time: Evidence from England

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Abstract

Background: The debates about the failures of multiculturalism emerging in the past two decades have questioned whether ethnic minorities gradually integrate into British society or instead lead “parallel lives” in segregated neighbourhoods and schools. Recent literature on residential segregation has refuted the notion of self-segregation by examining segregation occurring at multiple geographical scales. The multi-scale method matters because different scales can indicate mechanisms and consequences of segregation. However, the multiscale nature of segregation has not yet received sufficient attention in the context of school segregation.

Aims and research questions: This paper aims to provide an overview of multi-scale, multigroup ethnic segregation in English schools during the past two decades. Three research questions are posed. Firstly, how does ethnic school segregation differ across geographic scales? Secondly, is segregation getting worse? Third, how do residential segregation and pupils' cross-border movement collectively contribute to the variations in school segregation?

Methodology and data: This paper uses two entropy-based measures, the mutual information index (M) and Theil's index (H). The primary data source is individual-level Spring School Census data from the National Pupil Database.

Results: Approximately half of the school segregation in East Midlands and London occurs between local authorities. Yorkshire has the highest level of school segregation, occurring predominantly within local authorities. Residential segregation at the LSOA level has a significant impact on school segregation in Yorkshire. Yorkshire has a low level of crossborder movement of pupils, resulting in the segregation in neighbourhoods being largely translated into schools. Residential segregation is relatively low in London and East Midlands, and cross-border movement moderates the adverse effects of residential segregation. In all, schools in most areas have witnessed a growing racial diversity and a sustained decline in segregation, including some northern towns that were viewed as “spaces of failed multiculturalism”.

‘Making Heritage Matter’? Teaching local mining history in primary schools

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Abstract

This article presents the findings of research into the teaching of local industrial history in a socially deprived primary school in post-industrial north-east England. The first of the article’s three substantive sections sets out the methodology and rationale. The second, drawing on qualitative data from participant observation, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with teachers and pupils, presents our main findings; that such teaching can fit with the demands of the English national curriculum; that it can be particularly engaging for children and, drawing on the place-based education literature, that it can also enable children to better understand who they are, in relation to their environment. The discussion section finds that the topic can appeal regardless of ethnicity or gender. We further conclude that schools can benefit significantly in the successful delivery of this teaching from partnerships with the local expertise of relevant community associations.
Flippin’ the Script: Student Perceptions of Race, Racism, and Racial Inclusion in Higher Education

Christopher Jones
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Abstract

In UK higher education, racial inequality is a predominant issue amongst students and staff. In this thesis, I draw together the literature on race, racism, and racial inclusiveness within the educational system. Using critical race analysis and adopting a qualitative approach (e.g., Thematic analysis), this research was designed to explore racial inclusiveness through perceptions of students who are Black (African) and White at a Russell Group institution, specifically Durham University, aiming to illustrate racial disparities and suggest methods to achieve a more inclusive university environment. With increasing numbers of students of the resilient minority attending university, we must dismantle the racial inequality that persists in education by understanding the barriers students encounter and how students who are White view the influx of resilient minority groups gravitating towards “their” “elite” institutions.

Shai Kassirer
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Abstract

As the impacts of climate change accelerate, Israel has experienced three long droughts since the turn of the century: 1999-2001, 2004-2011 and 2014-2017. In response to this recurring water scarcity, seawater desalination (SD, technology removing minerals from saline water, making it suitable for human consumption and irrigation) now supplies 80% of the country’s household water consumption. Whilst promising steady water supplies and drought recovery, SD is a particular technology and hydro-policy that has long-term environmental, health, economic, national political and geopolitical implications.

This paper follows the historical development of the hydro-policies discourse in Israel over an eighteen-year period through its media representation. How did the Israeli newspapers cover the causes and implications of these droughts and the recovery efforts over the years? Given the complex and transformative implications of SD, how were the competing environmental, economic and (geo)political aspects of the drought recovery presented in news discourse?

Findings are based on a longitudinal critical discourse analysis of newspapers’ coverage of droughts in Israel during 2001-2018 (N=936). It concentrates on three pre-identified periods one for each drought, which coincide with periods of formal governmental inquiry of hydro-policies.

Findings show that in every period, newspapers framed the drought as a “water crisis” due to “governmental failure-to-act” and a supply and demand imbalance, with the connection to climate change marginalised and questioned. While delegitimising political disagreements between the contesting discourse-coalitions (Agro-Zionist, Economic, Environmental and Social-Municipal), the newspapers generated a consensus around the continual expansion of privatised SD. Furthermore, the longitudinal findings reveal the expansion of techno-managerial, expert-based depoliticised discourses in the newspapers, which became hegemonic over time, mainly in the form of economisation. Finally, the scope of the discourse on recovery was limited to drought risk and not wider intersecting issues, such as climate change, environmental justice and inequality.
“We’re in the Zone now”: Weird Geographies for the Anthropocene

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Abstract

This paper uses a literary geography framework to discuss the integration of weird fiction into geographical analysis of the Anthropocene. Drawing from an extensive review of contemporary academic literature on ‘the Weird’, I highlight the genre as a source of evocative and productive perspectives and concepts for critical inspection of the current crisis. A pragmatic geographical conceptualisation of the Weird is developed and applied to current turns within geography towards spatial, phenomenological, Neo-Marxist and more-than-human analyses of the Anthropocene.

The paper centres on the Weird figure of ‘The Zone’, as developed by the Strugatsky brothers in Roadside Picnic (1972) and popularised by Jeff Vandermeer’s Annihilation (2014), positing it as a spatial form of alterity suited to processing the localised emergences of more-than-human agencies that are characteristic of the Anthropocene. The Zone is argued to be a site of disorientation, exposing those within and without to vivid experiences of the radically new, the strange, and the ontologically disruptive: in a word, the Weird.

The paper also considers several theoretical applications of a Weird register or mode. Reading current studies of the Anthropocene, I propose the possibility of a phenomenological ‘Global Weirding’, a Weird re-articulation of more-than-human methodologies, and a postcolonial Weird attuned to the ‘eerie’ workings of capital. The paper concludes with an inspection of other potential directions, particularly stressing the adoption of Rita Indiana’s Tentacle (2018) into the ‘Weird canon’ and the ongoing need to decentre the Weird, as genre and field of study.
Using Twitter data and remote sensing imagery to support emergency services in assessing the impacts of natural hazards

Kristina Wolf\textsuperscript{1}, Richard Dawson\textsuperscript{1}, Jon Mills\textsuperscript{1}, Phil Blythe\textsuperscript{1}, Jeremy Morley\textsuperscript{2}

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Abstract

Geographic information systems help emergency services develop disaster management plans and perform operations. To identify communities at risk, they rely on currently available static information about vulnerable populations and critical infrastructure.

The recent technological emergence of low-cost satellite imagery and platforms such as Google Earth Engine and Planet Explorer now provides access to near real-time earth observations and various analytical techniques. Emergency services can monitor and assess potentially vulnerable areas from space, better understand natural phenomena such as floods, and assess their impact on the environment through a time-series of available satellite data.

Another data source providing near real-time emergency information during a crisis is the social networking platform Twitter. To categorise the growing amount of user-generated data and gain a holistic overview of the situation in real-time, emergency services require a spatial framework that integrates remote sensing imagery with tweets and other critical information.

Using the example of the summer floods in mid-July 2021, which affected several countries in Europe, we show how emergency services can use satellite imagery and real-time Twitter updates to better understand the course of events and the impact of natural hazards over time. When social media posts are analysed alongside other data, Twitter can give responders indicators about areas and people at risk, help them provide aid in a more targeted way, and deploy their resources more effectively. In addition, data mining and sentiment analysis can help extract meaningful information from unstructured social media data and provide first responders with meaningful insights for their response.
Climate Justice, Transformation, Research-Activists and the Financialization of Higher Education

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Abstract

With the climate crisis worsening inequities and disparities around the world, the need for transformative social and economic change is becoming more clear and urgent. Despite the potential for higher education to support and facilitate transformative social change for climate justice, the financialization of higher education is limiting the capacity of scholars to engage with transformative social movements. Rather than facilitating social and technical change toward climate justice, many policies, priorities and practices within higher education constrain researchers to focus on non-transformative climate approaches which end up reinforcing the status quo, exacerbating economic inequities, perpetuating climate vulnerabilities among marginalized communities, and disproportionally benefitting privileged individuals and organizations. With higher education increasingly focused on supporting individual academic success to achieve financial goals, students, faculty and researchers are discouraged from engaging with societal transformation. In the United States and many other countries, the higher education sector is increasingly providing yet another mechanism to funnel public resources (in the form of research support) to private corporate entities. In addition to limiting the capacity for scholar-activists to engage in transformative actions, the problematic financial model of higher education continues to concentrate wealth and power among elites and resists transformative economic change in society to address the climate crisis. This research explores how the financialization of higher education is restricting the development of scholar-activists and reducing social innovation toward climate justice by slowing down a just transition to a more equitable, healthy and climate resilient future. This research also identifies some specific initiatives, policies and investments that could expand opportunities for scholar-activists to accelerate, rather than slow down, transformative change for climate justice.
The association between long-term exposure to air pollution and mortality in Scotland: A 16-years follow-up cohort study (2002-2017)

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Abstract

Background: Although the effect of air pollution on health and mortality is studied extensively, there is lack of research on the long-term exposure (10+ years) to air pollution. Additionally, spatial-temporal limitations are often encountered in the existing literature including ecological bias, spatial-autocorrelation, and between-within (spatial-temporal) causality measures. This study applies a between-within longitudinal design to investigate the association of 16-years exposure to air pollution and all-cause and cause-specific mortality in Scotland.

Methods: We followed a “Scottish-Longitudinal-Study (SLS)” cohort of 202,200 individuals aged 17+ for 16-years (2002-2017; N=2,821,300 person-years; n=42,400 total-deaths). The SLS data was linked to yearly concentrations of NO₂, SO₂, and particulate-matter (PM10, PM2.5) pollution using the individual’s residential-postcode. Cox Proportional-Hazard models with age as timescale were used to assess the association between air pollution and all-cause, cardiovascular, respiratory, cancer, mental/behavioural disorders, and other-causes mortality. All models accounted for spatial-autocorrelation of air pollution between neighbouring postcodes using Local-Geary’s-C score.

Results: A higher hazard of all-cause mortality was shown with increasing concentrations of NO₂ (HR=1.009; 95%CI=1.007-1.012), SO₂ (HR=1.008; 95%CI=1.000-1.015), PM10 (HR=1.016; 95%CI=1.009-1.023), and PM2.5 (HR=1.035; 95%CI=1.023-1.047) pollutants. Air pollution was also associated with cardiovascular, respiratory, cancer and other-causes mortality. Mortality from mental/behavioural disorders showed an association only with SO₂ pollutant (HR=1.047; 95%CI=1.020-1.074). Decomposing air pollution into between (16-years average pollutant-concentration between postcodes) and within (annual deviation of pollutant-concentration from the 16-years average within each postcode) effects, revealed significant between but not within effects for all pollutants on mortality. Thus, the effect of air pollution on mortality is a spatial-oriented one and causality cannot be claimed for this association.

Conclusion: Using 16-years cohort data linked with contextual-level information on air pollution and controlling for spatial-autocorrelation, our study supports the association between air pollution and all-cause and cause-specific mortality. Though, the between-within analysis did not show evidence of causality.
Heritage and authenticity in the recapturing of urban tourism: the Athens Marathon race between the debt crisis and the covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Urban tourism based on thematic events rather than city breaks can sometimes revitalize cities after regional or global disasters. Several major sports events were cancelled during the covid-19 pandemic, affecting their host cities in a dramatic way. Disaster geographies have more long-standing roots in the South because of the debt crisis that preceded the pandemic, while uneven development persists. Our quantitative and qualitative analysis of participation of foreign and domestic, informal (amateur) and formal athletes in the “authentic” Athens Marathon race has revealed an unexpected recovery. The examination of data series of the last 15 years of the 21st century, showed a decline of participation only during the worst year of the debt crisis and the threat of Grexit in 2015. The race was later cancelled by the government during the culmination of the pandemic in 2020, but the following year many international athletes returned. These unexpected fluctuations show that heritage and authenticity represented by the Marathon race kept it afloat, less so during the debt crisis, but much more during the covid-19 pandemic: people were willing and eager to resume a sports event despite the looming risk of contagion which was – and still is – around us. Contrary to possible expectations, health considerations, which are phrased by governments and media, appear to be less grave than economic instability for an athletic community that by default should be primarily concerned with health, fitness and well-being in order to be able to perform. In Greece, the pandemic has hardly discouraged sports, except when the government imposed restrictions and closed borders. Despite intimidation and lockdowns, an emancipatory spontaneous movement has been under way in Athens, which is affecting the recovery of sports and urban tourism. It is worth reflecting upon this movement from different intellectual, ontological and philosophical angles.
Cairo’s Lost Necropolis: Symbolic Spaces, Tomb Dwellers, and Heritage Sites

WAEL FAHMI
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Abstract

The current presentation examines the contested spaces within Cairo’s historic cemetery areas (Cities of the Dead), as a result of recent official demolition and eviction operations launched by the state-controlled military regime. Such actions are mainly attributed to the creation of a new highway road axis as part of the ongoing expansion of the infrastructural transport network. Historically, the urban fabric within the Cities of the Dead is characterised by the presence of Islamic heritage shrines, significant tombs of prominent political, religious, and cultural figures, courtyards and burial grounds owned by Cairene families, and informal residential buildings. There are rural migrants and urban poor who have occupied tombs and courtyards as they moved away from inner-city residential core areas as a result of high land prices and shortage of affordable housing stock.

Based on earlier empirical data and recent secondary study, the presentation highlights the historical evolution, social dynamics, and spatial changes within two case study areas to the north and to the east of the UNESCO heritage district of historic Cairo. The study explores the impact of ongoing gentrification plans on the future of the cemeteries and on tomb dwellers’ right to the city and their resilience to official eviction plans.

The paper emphasises the significance of the Cities of the Dead regarding its symbolic status and heritage monuments, whilst considering the future of tomb dwellers and surrounding poverty belts. The findings propose a stakeholder approach to the sustainable development of the Cities of the Dead in terms of its heritage value and informal residential occupation. Such an approach aims at advocating radical policy action and collaborative planning for consolidating bottom-up urban governance away from the military regime’s ongoing neo-liberal intervention policies.
Sensory lives on a decaying island

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Abstract

Living with the history of an abandoned holiday resort, three Bangladeshis remain as the custodians and sole inhabitants of a tiny island in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Contemporary cultural geographies of abandoned and ruinous sites tend to celebrate vacant spaces as a break from the normative ordering impulses of everyday life, as sites at which intimations of the past swarm and coagulate, triggered by a distinctive array of sensations. Yet there are other places that are in a state of stand-by, not yet ruined but ceaselessly maintained to keep entropy at bay. At such sites, a melding of everyday human routines, partial deterioration, absences and possible futures shape sensory apprehension. On the island, the three men attempt to keep a semblance of order through incessantly attending to the upkeep of trees, chalets and gardens. An environment of slow material decay and botanical fecundity is supplemented by their work and their repurposing of areas of the site for their everyday activities. They make their meals in a huge kitchen replete with industrial size pans, store coconuts in large piles, use home-made exercise equipment in a room adapted to house a vernacular gym, tend flowering plants in rusting tins and use a tumbledown shack to make phone calls to their families far away. These intimate, sensory encounters with island space and each other take place in a realm of crumbling walls, peeling paint and colonising mould, with some buildings falling into the sea. The meld of incessant upkeep, decay, daily practices and conviviality supplement the sensory overload of gentle breezes, lapping waves and relentless heat. Periods of silence heighten the stark absence of the holidaymakers and workers who once thronged the island, and who may do so again in the future.
Sensing the archive; material culture and historical sensory geography

Ivan Marković
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Abstract

Despite the growing popularity of various iterations of sensory history across the disciplines that has occurred over the past few decades, there has been a distinct lack of writing on how to actually do these multisensory investigations once in the archive. Smith’s (2007) own approach that roots any kind of sensory historiography in ‘habit’, ‘a way of thinking about the past’ or ‘attunement’ does little to help the novice or indeed the experienced historian when confronted with mountains of potentially valuable written sources; diaries and newspaper articles, medical accounts and pamphlets, letters and etiquette guides. This archival encounter becomes even more painful when confronted with material culture.

Conversely, historical geography has in the same time period been at the forefront of thinking about archives, having thoroughly interrogated and re-examined what the archive and archival research is. It is precisely in this body of work, I suggest, that we can find the epistemological and methodological tools to sense, and make sense of, the archive.

Narrating the story through three vignettes from a larger project that sought to recover and animate a sensory historical geography of smoking, and specifically the smoking suit, in the late 19th century, this paper offers an account of methodological failure in the archive. An attempt of sensing material culture that despite its initial disappointment has a lot to offer to historical geographers interested in taking seriously the multisensory constructions of the past.
Applying GIS and Text Mining Methods to Twitter Data to Explore the Spatiotemporal Patterns of Topics of Interest in Kuwait

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Abstract

Researchers have developed various approaches for exploring the spatial information, temporal patterns, and Twitter content in topics of interest in order to generate a better understanding of human behavior; however, few investigations have integrated these three dimensions simultaneously. This study analyzes the content of tweets in order to conduct a spatiotemporal exploration of the main topics of interest in Kuwait in order to provide a deeper understanding of the topics people think about, when they think about them, and where they tweet about them. To this end, we collect, process, and analyze tweets from nearly 120 areas in Kuwait over a 10-month period. The study’s results indicate that religion, emotions, education, and public policy are the most popular topics of interest in Kuwait. Regarding the spatiotemporal analysis, people post more tweets regarding religion on Fridays, a holy day for Muslims in Kuwait. Moreover, people are more likely to tweet about policy and education on weekdays rather than weekends. In contrast, people tweet about emotional expressions more often on weekends. From the spatial perspectives, spatial clustering in topics occurs across the days of the week. The findings are applicable to further topic analysis and similar research in other countries.
Traps, Apps and Maps: to what extent do they provide decision-grade data on biodiversity?

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Abstract

The ecosystem services arising from the restoration of natural capital are now increasingly recognised as environmental opportunities and monetised, with international climate negotiations focussing on the need for investment into natural capital, and the finance sector pledging to invest. The finance sector has also called for decision-grade, asset level data about nature projects in order to facilitate their reporting to investors. This paper offers a case study of novel digital data collection methods used to establish a baseline of faunal biodiversity in a Scottish nature-restoration project on the Bunloit estate which has secured private natural capital investment. Digital camera traps and apps were used to create digital maps to ensure annual survey replication, and citizen scientist engagement. The results were digital images, soundwaves and metabarcodes and their metadata, classified by both professional ecologists and citizen scientists. We discuss how the digital data gathered through traps, apps and maps in the case study can be qualified as decision-grade data, according to the Taskforce for Nature-based Financial Disclosure’s specification. We conclude that decision-grade biodiversity data may be produced by practitioners, with limited resources, and make recommendations for data collection and governance methods to ensure nature restoration projects generate decision-grade data for ecosystem services markets.
Examining International Student Mobility from an Internal Mobility Perspective: The Role of Chinese Hukou Policy in Shaping Return Migration after International Study.

Erli Kang, David McCollum, Sharon Leahy
University of St Andrews, UK

Abstract

The study of international student mobility (ISM) has increased rapidly in the last two decades. This literature has paid considerable attention to why, how and where students participate in ISM. However, there is limited research exploring the extent to which the sending country affects the ISM. To fulfil the gap, this study focuses on how Chinese population registration system (hukou) affects Chinese students’ ISM and their relocation experience after returning. This study involved 90 semi-structured interviews included 50 returned students both from the UK and Hong Kong, 20 HR staff from Shanghai and 20 other stakeholders, such as hukou brokers and international education brokers. This research found that the hukou policy has an influence at nearly every stage of Chinese students’ ISM process, which includes pre-departure, whilst abroad, upon return and after return. The influence is not limited to motivation and overseas students’ life, but also the internal migration experience and career experience after returning. This study deployed Bourdieu’s concept of capital, habitus and field from a relational perspective to understand the Chinese returning students hukou experience. These findings highlight the importance of social, cultural, economic and policy environment in the ISM sending countries to influence the process and outcome of ISM.
Local governments (LGs) in Europe are key providers of public goods and services. But decades of budget pressure have constrained their ability to do so. A growing body of scholarship argues that in response, some LGs have turned to ‘financially mediated means’ (Peck & Whiteside, 2016) of revenue generation and service provision. But this creates a host of new distributional, democratic, and financial risks. Understanding the role of LGs and nature of these financially mediated means is crucial for efforts seeking to avert and mitigate such risks. This paper develops a conceptual framework to aid our understanding of ‘local government financialisation’ in Europe. Based on a systematic literature review of a diverse but complementary scholarship across academic disciplines, I argue that LGs can act as enablers as well as active financialisers. Structuring my literature review around these two roles, four definitions of LG financialisation emerge. First, under pressure from national-level austerity, LGs – often unwillingly – enable the financialisation of their assets and services through privatisation and outsourcing. Second, LGs use their regulatory and planning powers to enlist financial investors for their development objectives, with the unintended consequence of enabling the financialisation of public assets in the process. Third, LGs adopt proactive strategies when managing their physical and financial assets, seeking to achieve return on investment and/or control over local socio-economic processes. Finally, LGs use active techniques of managing their debt, including structured loans and derivatives, to optimise their borrowing cost and, at times, make a speculative profit.
Levelling up? COVID infections and areas of affluence/deprivation in England

Richard Harris
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

In their paper, 'Area level deprivation and monthly COVID-19 cases: The impact of government policy in England', Morrissey, Spooner, Salter & Shaddick (2021) show that area level deprivation is significantly associated with monthly COVID-19 cases in England, a finding that is substantiated by other research. Here that association is explored further with weekly and regional data over a longer period of, at the time of writing, 104 weeks. It reveals that for much of the pandemic, if the most deprived neighbourhoods had the attributes of the most affluent or their populations then there would have been fewer COVID cases. However, since the end of 2021, and with the emergence of the Omicron variant, that situation has reversed -- deprived neighbourhoods have now fewer cases overall. Furthermore, for all of the pandemic, the differences between regions (and between sub-regions) are much greater than the differences between deprivation deciles. In other words, regional (and sub-regional) effects exceed deprivation ones. However, this is not to say that deprivation does not matter because the geography of deprivation in England is related to the regional geography of COVID: a greater concentration of deprived neighbourhoods at a sub-regional scale is often related to higher COVID rates, much more that a greater concentration of affluent neighbourhoods is. What, therefore, needs a 'shot in the arm' is not just people and their vaccinations but renewed efforts to tackle geographical inequalities in health and other socio-spatial inequalities. The analysis presented is fully reproducible using the code available at https://rpubs.com/profrichharris/COVID-deprivation.
How has healthcare disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic affected socioeconomic inequalities in avoidable hospitalisations

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¹University of Liverpool, UK. ²London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK. ³University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed considerable pressures on health systems. In the UK, a large amount of National Health Service (NHS) activity has been postponed, cancelled or changed to remote modes of delivery to build NHS resilience in coping with COVID-19 cases. While previous research has described the extent of this disruption, there has a lack of investigation into the implications and impacts on population health of this disruption.

Any impacts of healthcare disruption are unlikely to have been evenly experienced across society and may have exacerbated socioeconomic inequalities in health.

In this presentation, we will examine the extent that healthcare disruption has impacted health outcomes and associated inequalities. We focus on avoidable hospitalisations as our primary health outcome. Avoidable hospitalisations represent hospital admissions that in theory could have been prevented through access to timely care in the community. We hypothesise that such access to services could have been disrupted by the pandemic, resulting in individuals being at higher risk of being hospitalised.

Two case studies will be presented to evaluate if healthcare disruption has impacted social inequalities in avoidable hospitalisations: (i) Individual-level records for 14 UK Cohort studies linked to electronic health records will be used to assess the experiences of healthcare disruption. Binomial regression models for individual cohorts and meta-analyses across pooled cohorts will examine if self-reported measures on whether individuals experienced disruption of their care were associated to avoidable hospitalisation. Analyses will be stratified by sex, age group and socioeconomic status to investigate impacts on inequalities. (ii) Electronic health records for 58M people in England from OpenSAFELY will be used to estimate trends in avoidable hospitalisations. Slope and Relative Index of Inequality will be estimated to identify how inequalities by neighbourhood deprivation change during different periods of the pandemic. Regional inequalities will also be presented.
Continuing inequalities in COVID-19 mortality in England and Wales, and the changing importance of regional, over local, deprivation

Gareth Griffith
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

Background: Observational studies have highlighted that where individuals live is far more important for risk of dying with COVID-19, than for dying of other causes. Deprivation is commonly proposed as explaining such differences. During the period of localised restrictions in late 2020, areas with higher restrictions tended to be more deprived. We explore how this impacted the relationship between deprivation and mortality and see whether local or regional deprivation matters more for inequalities in COVID-19 mortality.

Methods: We use publicly available population data on deaths due to COVID-19 and all-cause mortality between March 2020 and April 2021. We use a multiscale approach to simultaneously consider three spatial scales through which processes driving inequalities may act. We go on to explore whether deprivation explains such inequalities.

Results: Adjusting for population age structure and number of care homes, we find highest regional inequality in October 2020, with a COVID-19 mortality rate ratio of 5.86 (95% CI 3.31 to 19.00) for the median between-region comparison. We find spatial context is most important, and spatial inequalities higher, during periods of low mortality. Almost all unexplained spatial inequality in October 2020 is removed by adjusting for deprivation. During October 2020, one standard deviation increase in regional deprivation was associated with 2.45 times higher local mortality (95% CI, 1.75 to 3.48).

Conclusions: Spatial inequalities are greatest in periods of lowest overall mortality, implying that as mortality declines it does not do so equally. During the prolonged period of low restrictions and low mortality in summer 2020, spatial inequalities strongly increased. Contrary to previous months, we show that the strong spatial patterning during autumn 2020 is almost entirely explained by deprivation. As overall mortality declines, policymakers must be proactive in detecting areas where this is not happening, or risk worsening already strong health inequalities.
COVID-19 and deprivation amplification: an ecological study of geographical inequalities in mortality in England

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Abstract

International research has found that more deprived areas have fared worse in terms of COVID-19 mortality. However, there has been little exploration of the interaction of different geographical scales. Health geography’s concept of ‘deprivation amplification’ is potentially relevant to thinking about such issues. This study uses age and ethnicity-adjusted COVID-19 mortality data from March 2020 to April 2021 for 6,791 Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs) in England – stratified by deprivation and region. We examine whether more deprived MSOAs in the more deprived northern regions suffered greater COVID-19 mortality rates. Spatial-lag models were used to examine any impact of spatial clustering and potential ‘spill-over’ effects between neighbouring MSOAs. The North West (25.5 COVID-19 deaths/10,000) and the North East (24.2/10,000) had the highest average COVID-19 mortality rates, compared to the South West (13.4/10,000). The most deprived 20% of MSOAs had higher mortality than the least deprived (8.2 more COVID-19 deaths/10,000). There were interactions in these geographical inequalities: deprived MSOAs in the north fared worse than equally deprived areas in the rest of England (3.1 more deaths/10,000; p<0.01). There was also strong evidence of spatial clustering and spill-overs: the COVID-19 mortality rate and deprivation levels of neighbouring areas impacted on the mortality of each MSOA. We discuss the implications of these findings in relation to the utility of ‘deprivation amplification’, the ‘syndemic pandemic’, and the wider health and place literature.
Social infrastructure: why it matters and how geographers might study it

Alan Latham
UCL, UK

Abstract

Social infrastructure is an emerging research frontier in urban geography and urban studies. This introduction to the session provides a concise introduction to the term. It briefly sets out the intellectual provenance of the concept of social infrastructure, examining the different ways social infrastructure is being used across urban geography. It will also lay some foundations for the session, highlighting some of the key themes and questions that the session will go onto explore.
Policing the Pandemic: Examining the spatial-temporal patterning of compliance and vulnerability through COVID fines

Victoria Gorton\textsuperscript{1}, Kath Murray\textsuperscript{1}, Susan McVie\textsuperscript{1}, Ben Matthews\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}University of Edinburgh, UK. \textsuperscript{2}University of Stirling, UK

Abstract

In March 2020, the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations Act 2020 came into force. These regulations placed unprecedented legal restrictions on everyday life and provided police with temporary powers to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to, or in extreme circumstances, to arrest, any person who was reasonably believed to have breached them. At their heart, these emergency public health regulations sought to keep the public safe, aiming to ‘reduce the spread of the virus and safe lives’. However, apart from media stories of stray walkers or partying politicians, there has been relatively little systematic examination of who were (or were not) issued with these fines, nor any attempts to evaluate the public health risk posed by individuals who were fined.

In this talk, we present early findings from the ‘Policing the Pandemic in Scotland’ project. This mixed methods study brings together police administrative data, interview data from police officers and those who received Fixed Penalty Notices, and an ambitious linked dataset, which links police Fixed Penalty Notice data with COVID-19 testing data and other health data. We ask: 1) To what extent were factors such as demographic characteristics, existing health and social vulnerabilities, and geographic situation associated with receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice? 2) How did these factors change through the pandemic, in particular between the two national lockdowns (March 2020 and January 2021)? 3) What was the level of COVID-19 health risk posed by those who failed to comply with the regulations? To answer these questions, we use a mix of mapping, statistical modelling, and thematic analysis.

Our findings offer a unique evidence base through which to assess the fairness and legitimacy of the regulations themselves, as well as a broader investigation into the intersection between people, place and pathogens.
Coronavirus Restrictions and Subjective Wellbeing (SWB): New Evidence from the ONS OPN Covid-19 Survey

Chris Deeming, Shimaa Elkomy
University of Strathclyde, UK

Abstract

Different sets of public health restrictions have been introduced at different stages of the pandemic in England, Scotland and Wales, reflecting governmental action to suppress the virus. In this study we consider the social impact of the pandemic and lockdowns restrictions on the UK population and subnational populations with a focus on Subjective Wellbeing (SWB). We pool 50 waves of the new Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) COVID-19 Social Impacts survey by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to empirically examine the social and SWB impacts of different public health interventions. We consider the impact that the pandemic has had on SWB, examining pandemic/prepandemic effects in the survey data. We also look at what effect the duration of the pandemic has had on SWB levels. Finally, we consider the impact of different public health measures and restrictions on SWB, here we consider the impact and effects of school shutdown, work closure, and the stay at home policy. We also discuss some of the methodological challenges and developments in our work, and some of the practical issues of working with the OPN COVID-19 module data, accessed remotely via the Office for National Statistics Secure Research Service (SRS).
Neighbourhood libraries as social infrastructure

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Abstract

How do public libraries serve as social infrastructure for neighbourhoods and support community life? Based on the significance of socio-spatial cohesion, we conceptualise libraries as places of ambivalence: places of non-commercial stay, deliberate tranquillity and diverse encounters. Due to the interpenetration of public and private spheres, they create multifunctional usages for its users as the (un)known other. In the German context the transformation process from a ‘book container’ (according to the German semantics ‘Biblio-Thek’) to a place of learning/working, inspiration, and openness as well as social, cultural, and digital participation has just begun. As highly inclusionary and safe contact zones, libraries are infrastructures that people enable to negotiate both togetherness, coexistence and conflict mediated by minimal solidarity, trust and identification. The neighbourhood library as a site for the recovery and (re)production of social cohesion has, however, come under pressure from the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the fundamental question for urban research is how communities can (re)create social cohesion in and through social infrastructures. In our paper we assume that lived, learned and felt neighbourly cohesion in libraries is a good example for exploring the role of social infrastructure as integrated and integrating place for everyone. We use a mixed-method-approach by comparing two contrasting public libraries in two urban neighbourhoods of Hanover, Germany. Focusing on the emerging forms and figurations of (dis)cohesion in libraries, we present empirical findings of action-motivated encounters occurring as everyday community practice. On this ground, we point at context-specific patterns and dynamics that promote and/or inhibit neighbourly (dis)cohesion at the locale scale. As contingent sites, libraries offer what Blokland and Nast once called ‘public familiarity’: an experience of being expected and accepted, the ability to assess what is to be expected including a reasonable understanding of social codes and unwritten rules.
Rural Response to COVID-19: A survey of the Impacts on Mental Health

Leith Deacon, Sara Epp, Silvia Sarapura, Wayne Caldwell
University of Guelph, Canada

Abstract

The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are far-reaching and extend beyond the spread of the disease and efforts to quarantine it. Developing impactful resilience strategies requires a regional- and community-scale focus. COVID-19 has increased individuals’ levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Individuals with pre-existing mental health and substance use disorders are at an increased risk of having negative physical and psychological effects from the pandemic. Additionally, there are concerns over new individuals being diagnosed with anxiety and depressive symptoms as well as some individuals experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder. While most Canadians live in urban centres, nearly 20% of the national population resides in small and/or rural centres. Across Canada’s rural landscape are communities facing unique realities (e.g., physical isolation) and complex challenges (e.g., economic vulnerabilities). Compounding these challenges are cultural considerations that are common across rural geographies (e.g., perception of weakness associated with mental health (i.e., strong ‘man’ attitude), distrust in government, perception of invisibility from government and policy makers). Historically, policies and programs are based on data collected on the experiences of urban residents; There is a lack of engagement with populations from small and rural communities. This presentation will highlight data collected from a survey (N=25,000) of residents from small and rural communities in Ontario, Canada about their experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Particular attention will focus on mental health and the need to address rural populations when developing response plans.
A library is a library, not a multi purpose swiss knife”: Tensions in the library as social infrastructure

Salene Schloffel-Armstrong
Waipapa Taumata Rau / University of Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

Public libraries are increasingly being celebrated as key sites of social infrastructure in the contemporary city. Although libraries in many locales are still at severe risk of defunding, constricted access or closure, in other places services are expanding to embrace broader social functions. However, this growing focus on sociality within libraries has not been universally embraced. This paper engages with public submissions on the futures of two central city libraries in New Zealand to illustrate how these changes in provision and purpose are conceptualised by library users. These submissions illustrate a clear understanding of the shifts occurring within the institution, and show that library users are actively participating in attempts to define the contemporary form of the public library. For these individuals, the central polarising tension forms around the formal expansion of space for social activities and basic utilities to support urban life (like access to bathrooms, or phone charging stations), instead of traditional book-based services. Tensions over the use of space in the library for social functions, and the increased presence of visible social reproductive labour within neighbourhood branches illuminates the contested nature of retaining, maintaining, and reproducing public spaces in the city. This paper challenges the application of social infrastructure as a frictionless descriptor of spaces of sociality (Hall, 2020), adding to recent scholarship that explores public space as something unstable that is constantly - and actively - being made (Qian, 2020).
Simulating the impact of reduced levels of obesity on COVID-19 outcomes in Devon: A spatial analysis using the DyME Model

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Abstract

Obesity is an established risk factor for severe COVID-19 COVID-19 illness, hospitalization, and mortality. This suggest that a healthier population with a healthier average Body Mass Index (BMI) would have suffered fewer severe COVID-19 cases and deaths than a population with a larger number of overweight and obese individuals. We test this using the case-study of Devon, a unitary authority in the south-west of the UK where 27% of the adult population are obese. Here we use a dynamic microsimulation for epidemiology (DyME; Spooner et al., 2021) model to replicate the first COVID-19 outbreak in Devon at the small area level. Using the DyME model we compared the infection fatality ratio (IFR) of COVID-19, in a baseline Devon population, to the IFR in a healthier simulated Devon population, where just 7.5% of the adult population are obese. Two results stand out. First, we find that the simulated IFR is lower when the population health is improved by reducing the BMI status of obese individuals in the Devon population, with certain areas of Devon seeing the greatest reduction. Second, we see approximately 13% fewer deaths due to COVID in the population with a lower BMI, however this rate differs by spatial location. Our results indicate that the severity of the first COVID outbreak might be ameliorated public health interventions to reduce population BMI.
Situating social connection: social infrastructure and the spatialisation of social networks

Alasdair Jones
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Building on an established literature on ‘third’ places, an interdisciplinary literature concerned with the importance of social infrastructure to neighbourhood-based communities is emerging. In this literature, social infrastructures serve as informal and physical public gathering places for sociability at the local level. In urban design terms they serve as micro-level nodes where people congregate. Thus, social infrastructures theoretically have an important role to play in the formation and maintenance of local community social networks, and in affording material settings in which these connections (be they strong or weak ties) can coalesce.

There is an evident lack, however, of integration of social infrastructure theory and formal network analysis techniques, and a resultant gap in our understanding of how social infrastructures afford and mediate social networks in local neighbourhoods. This paper seeks to make some conceptual headway in addressing this gap through a review of studies that have sought to spatialize and situate social connections at the local neighbourhood level. This review will be used to set out a conceptual framework for developing methodological approaches that account for the neighbourhood settings in and through which social connections are made and maintained.
Social infrastructure and left behind communities: Reporting on joint work between UCL and the Durham Miners' Association

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\textsuperscript{1}UCL, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Durham Miners Association, UK

Abstract

Deteriorating social infrastructure is feature of left-behind communities. There is growing recognition, therefore, of the value of investments – often small scale – in ‘social infrastructure’. Here, the need is for investments in the renewal of the ‘foundational economy’ – the universal basic infrastructure and services that underpin sustainable communities. The chief economist of the Bank of England, Andy Haldane, has identified ‘strengthening the infrastructure that underpins the social sector [and] embedding for good the new model army of volunteers the [Covid] crisis has spawned’, as a key policy priority. Despite growing interest in the levelling up agenda, scarcely any work has been done to define and assess the social infrastructure requirements of left-behind places that meet the needs of their communities that have been illuminated by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as food poverty, absence of green spaces, endemic loneliness, etc. A recent poll by Survation suggested that ‘places to meet and other community facilities which bring people together’ was the chief priority in left-behind places but this begs the question of what kind of facilities and for whom and how should they be provided. The proposed research links to current debates about the inadequacy of a focus on increases in GDP as a measure of wellbeing and development. This paper will report on joint work between UCL and the Durham Miners’ Association aimed at achieving a deeper understanding the social infrastructure needs of left-behind places and how policy meet these.
Whose social infrastructure? Everyday use of public squares and its relationship to the neighbourhood

Hannah Widmer
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Abstract

Public squares, designed and maintained by public authorities, are important elements of urban social infrastructure that allow for a large range of activities with and alongside others. Often, they simultaneously serve as transit spaces in people’s everyday life. As places where one can pass by or spend time alone or with others, they provide space for thin sociality (Bodnar 2015) between people from all walks of life. Even though most encounters between strangers are fleeting, they are a necessary condition for ‘thicker’ kinds of sociality (Middleton and Samanani 2022) and were particularly missed during Covid-19 lockdowns (Kasinitz 2020). It is not clear, however, to which extent squares function as social infrastructure for encounters between strangers. Depending on the time of the day, their gender, age, class, family situation, etc., people use social infrastructure differently and might never meet at all.

This paper examines three public squares in the city of Zurich (Switzerland), their actual accessibility and responsiveness (Latham and Layton 2019) to people’s needs, and the ensuing diversity of users. To explore the relationship between the squares and the neighbourhoods, we compare the users of the squares to the neighbourhood population and determine which groups are under- or overrepresented. Fieldwork data – including counts, observations, and surveys – enables studying the type, duration, and frequency of activities in public space, and most importantly, who uses this social infrastructure. Middle-class people, for example, are overrepresented in all three squares despite being in socioeconomically different neighbourhoods. This suggests that the squares do not cater to the needs of some parts of the population, thereby challenging its capacity as a social infrastructure. By turning to the squares’ materialities, affordances and atmospheres to account for the absence of certain groups, this paper contributes to debates on diversity and sociality in public space.
Community-centred coworking as urban social infrastructure

Irene Manzini Ceinar
UCL, UK

Abstract

In May 2019, the Mayor of London publicly declared that social infrastructure is key to supporting inclusive and thriving neighbourhoods. Several scholars define the concept of social infrastructure as the way to research and value some spaces with a collective public character, including tangible and intangible aspects. In fact, alongside tangible services and social spaces, intangible networks and community support play an essential role. Oldenburg’s work on Third Place combines those aspects in the concept of ‘inclusively sociable’ spaces like cafes, community spaces and workspaces, such as community-centred coworking spaces.

Community-centred coworking spaces emerged to benefit the local area and are deeply embedded with the neighbourhood. Many of them pair with charities and cooperatives, often economically funded by local authorities, even if privately owned – representing a ‘state of liminality between public and private blurred boundaries’. This study aims to define the role of community-centred coworking as a place of social infrastructure, and their connection with the urban dimension, especially during Covid-19, by assessing the role and strategies adopted by Space4 Tech coworking in Finsbury Park (London) during 2020.
Social infrastructure and new landscapes of care: urban social life for older people in Greater Manchester during the pandemic.

Sophie Yarker
The University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

This paper brings the burgeoning geographical interest in social infrastructure into dialogue with the concept of landscapes of care to demonstrate how the complex spatiality that care and care relationships entail have been reconfigured by the pandemic. Social infrastructures allow people to come together, interact and build connections. Such connections can form the basis of informal networks of care, networks that have proven vital during the pandemic, yet which have been substantially reorientated as social distancing restrictions prevented us from gathering in the ‘usual’ ways. These reorientations of networks of care will be discussed by drawing on qualitative longitudinal research into the experiences of the pandemic for older people living in Greater Manchester. It will firstly explore the impact of being cut off from important spaces of social infrastructure on older people’s ability to receive care as well as care for others and themselves. Here, research found examples of increased social isolation, feelings of ageing and of mental and physical deconditioning as well as loss of independence, confidence, and identity. Secondly it will explore the new spaces of social infrastructure that emerged during the pandemic. Moments of care and community emerged on doorsteps, balconies, driveways and gardens providing spaces where people could be both together and ‘distanced’. In parallel to a constricting of networks of care the research also found evidence of the expansion of landscapes of care through the engagements with virtual spaces of connection often through the research participants first-time use of digital and online technologies. This prompts important questions about how the pandemic may have altered what we perceive as spaces of social infrastructures. The paper will conclude by reflecting on what these transformations in understandings of social infrastructure and how they orchestrate landscapes of care might mean for urban social life for older people post-pandemic.
Identifying places and social infrastructure in the neighbourhood that are important for social interaction and making place.

Danielle Drozdzewska, Natasha Webster
Stockholm University, Sweden

Abstract

Social infrastructure in the neighbourhood, including its spatiality, morphology and layout in material and physical form makes place, in the neighbourhood. A neighbourhood’s places – including ease of mobility, access, quality public spaces, green spaces and multifunctionality – enable social connections (Talen, 2019) and can engender opportunities for everyday interactions, leading to place attachment(s) to the neighbourhood.

In better understanding how social infrastructure has a bearing on residents’ relationships to their neighbourhood, in this paper we draw from survey data from a Swedish research project (The Neighbourhood Revisited: Spatial Polarization and Social Cohesion in Contemporary Sweden). In that survey we asked our participants to identify places in the neighbourhood that were important to them, and whether these places also provided opportunities to meet other neighbours. Following Zumelzu & Barrientos-Trinanes (2019: 902), we reasoned that a neighbourhood’s social infrastructure can ‘encourage social encounters and street life in neighbourhoods’. Our analyses has identified the importance of the selected places and related them to how social infrastructure links to sociality among neighbours. Overlaying our exploration of this relationship has been the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced how we encountered the neighbourhood spatially and socially, with many of us spending much more time than pre-pandemic, in and around our neighbourhoods.
Social infrastructures, neighbourhoods and solidarity in times of crises

Anna-Lisa Müller\textsuperscript{1}, Leonie Tuitjer\textsuperscript{2}, Gesine Tuitjer\textsuperscript{3}
\textsuperscript{1}Bielefeld University, Germany. \textsuperscript{2}Leibniz University, Germany. \textsuperscript{3}Thünen Institute of Rural Studies, Germany

Abstract

During 2020 and 2021 and continuing today, the Covid-19 pandemic and associated public health measures significantly altered our everyday lives and routines. In the proposed presentation, we focus on social infrastructures of local provisions and the role they perform within cities under shutdown (e.g. Amin, 2008; Graham & McFarlane, 2014; Latham & Layton, 2019). Social infrastructures of local provisions such as supermarkets remained functional in Germany even during repeated shutdowns as they were perceived as essential for everyday life. Supermarkets hence turned from mundane sites of provision to sites where we could witness how infrastructures are deeply entangled with the micro-foundations of urban social life. Based on auto-ethnographic (Roy & Uekusa, 2020) accounts and documentary photography covering the period from March 2020 until September 2021, we explore how these spaces became primary sites through which to experience the changes caused by the pandemic. Writing from inner-city neighbourhoods, we highlight the need to attend to the ambiguous role of design, objects and materiality to adjust collective social practices and urban conviviality in the times of Covid-19. In addition, we discuss the shifts in the attribution of meaning and discourses through which neighbourhood-based consumption has been framed by small-shop owners. Here, we explore the local geographies of buycotting, the ways calls for buycotting became entangled with a specific neighbourhood identity and finally reflect on the limitations of consumption as a strategy to overcome crisis and express solidarity.
Connecting critical political geographies and geographies of education

Ruth Craggs
King's College London, UK

Abstract

This introductory paper explores some of the productive connections between critical political geographies and the geographies of education. Recent trends in political geography have sharpened focus on the seemingly mundane practices relegated to the background of geopolitical narratives of the state, including the production and transmission of knowledge, in and through education and training. Modern education is a powerful tool of statecraft, but less well-explored is the role of education at the interface of states. Spaces and practices of education and training shape social and professional norms, networks and exclusions, which in turn shape state-building and the international.
Rediscovering social infrastructure for circular and interconnected neighbourhoods: a research agenda

Bally Singh, Andrew Jonas
University of Hull, UK

Abstract

Before, during, and after Covid, urban planners, designers and policymakers have been turning their attention to the circular economy as a means of making more efficient use of existing resources, minimizing waste, and reducing carbon emissions within their cities. Existing ‘top down’ city-centric approaches strive to make flows of people, materials, goods and services through the local economy more efficient and environmentally sustainable by closing the loop between production and consumption, promoting the recirculation of provisions and resources, and improving social infrastructure and services such as refill, repair, re-use and recycling. Despite interventions designed to make cities more circular and sustainable, there is little understanding of how the universal (translative) social, digital and communal infrastructural elements of the circular economy can be reimagined and activated from the ‘bottom up’ to address spatial and environmental inequalities relating to poor health, chronic mobility, food poverty, and socio-economic deprivation across urban neighbourhoods. What role can citizens and city place-makers play in co-designing accessible circular and interconnected social infrastructures and accessible urban services for replenishing lives and livelihoods within and between neighbourhoods in cities, large and small, wealthy and poor? Can the circular economy be better activated and interconnected around a city through its constituent neighbourhoods not only to reduce a city’s carbon footprint but also to serve the social and material needs of its publics, residents and diverse inhabiting communities of practice and interest? In considering these questions, this paper outlines a research agenda for investigating how the regenerative, sustainable, restorative, replenishable, and universal attributes of the circular economy can be rediscovered and put into motion through collaborative citizen-inclusive urban service design, planning and wayfinding at the neighbourhood place-making scale across cities.
To imagine otherwise - decolonized geographies of Gaza

Annie Pfingst
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Abstract

Gaza’s multiple geographies of debris, toxic waste, environmental degradation, polluted air, contaminated water and destroyed infrastructure exist under what is now a 15 year long military siege and a 100 year imperial project and colonial occupation of historic Palestine. Subject to frequent Israeli bombardment engendering the evisceration of urban and rural geographies as well as purposefully constructing intensified humanitarian disasters, Gaza belies our capacity to imagine geographies beyond recovery.

Engaging then with the theme of the conference this paper brings a de-colonial feminist lens to apprehend Gaza, not as threat within Western imaginary, but rather as constitutive of carceral geographies of control, containment and punishment assembled through the interconnecting structures of settler colonial violence, racism, colonial corporeality, and carceral capitalism. If we attend to the premise that Gaza is everywhere, that we are all bonded, through grammars and institutions of global power, in multiple ways to the injury and harm enacted over Gaza – then we have to ask what it would take to decolonize our imaginaries, to decolonize Gaza - to not only know what is and what has been, but to imagine otherwise what could be.
Land administration, environmental justice, and decolonization: Exploring the accounts of indigenous people of South-eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

This study explores colonial legacies linked with land use and ownership as a component of peoples' cultural identities and their persistence in the post-colonial era, which has significant implications for the current debates on indigenous environmental justice (EJ). I assess the sufficiency, or lack thereof, of the EJ framing in the study region at the time, which symbolises the Western liberal ideas employed in a number of indigenous scholarship programmes worldwide, while ignoring the influence of colonialism and cultural oppression on environmental justice. Through a systematic review of the existing theories and a content analysis of additional secondary data, the paper argues that EJ framing from a Western worldview is insufficient to comprehend environmental injustice in the study area and that there is a need for environmental justice framing that incorporates the impact of colonialism and nonrecognition of the indigenous peoples' cultural identities, both of which contribute to environmental injustice. As a result, I conclude by relying on decolonial theory to argue for recognitional decolonialism as experienced and implemented by some indigenous peoples worldwide as a means of resolving the environmental injustice found in the study area.
Re-Scripting el Barrio: Accumulating Meanings of Murals in Latinx Neighborhoods in NYC

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Abstract

The focus of my contribution lies on social practices of resistance and the popular culture artifacts they produce. Concretely I analyze graffiti and murals by Latinx artists in Spanish Harlem and Bushwick, Brooklyn, their subsequent reception, their role in the neighborhoods’ and their residents’ identity construction as well as their possible commodification through private and institutional entities. Those practices, or as urban design scholar Jeffrey Hou calls them “[u]nsanctioned, unscripted, and seemingly ‘undesirable’ activities” (117) have, as he remarks, “long been a part of urban life” (117). Their meanings and utilizations, however, have undergone drastic developments in the last decades. Having started as a placemaking technique of Latinx artists mainly of Puerto Rican descent starting around the late 1960s - they primarily presented a way to inscribe ethnic identity into the neighborhood and claim the space creatively. By now those murals are at the center of narratives of ethnicity, resilience as well as ‘authenticity’ crafted by various stakeholders situated in- and, oftentimes also, outside of el barrio. These spatial markers still serve as inter- and intracultural educational texts for their viewers as well as producers neatly fitting into Michel de Certeau’s category of urban “tactics” (36) as renegotiations of the urban space by the general public.

Their reinterpretation in narratives of outsiders trying to sell a ‘hip’ vision of the area, however, has added meanings that can be diametrical to the murals’ original script of self-description and community building. Moreover, within the context of a constantly shifting demographic in New York City and in those two neighborhoods in particular, the visions of Latinx identity that those artworks reiterate are also put to the test and renegotiated by new and old residents alike.
Puy du Fou as „Softcore Historicism“: commodified practices of performative heritage.

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Abstract

Recent social distancing measures and heightened digital cultural consumption following the global coronavirus pandemic have underscored the importance of collective physical gatherings in producing social meaning. In this context, embodied and performative representations of the past such as historical reenactments have gained special relevance and increased authority within heritage discourses (Smith, 2006). This paper contextualizes such practices within a broader field of spatial practices of immersion (Mühlhoff and Theresa Schütz, Rose, 2011, Hannigan 2010) and historical embodiment (Pellegrini, 2001), analyzing how they operate as spaces of radical negativity towards contemporaneous political and social issues. I define such practices as “softcore historicisms”, referring to the way in which “soft” performative heritage practices based on affect are related with the validation of “hardcore” hegemonic discourses (Taylor, 2003; Agnew, 2004; Schneider, 2011).

As the latest example of this trend, the franchise Puy du Fou and its two theme parks in France (1989) and Spain (2021) are taken as case studies. Founded by right-wing politician Phillipe de Villiers, Puy du Fou presents historical narratives through immersive displays and live shows in order to authenticate nationalist discourses. Puy du Fou’s political agenda is further demonstrated by the cooperation until 2014 with Vladimir Putin for the construction of a third theme park in the occupied territory of Crimea, a gesture intended to vindicate the region’s Russian identity. Commodified reenactment practices such as Puy du Fou deploy a time warp that displaces meanings and social behaviors in time and space, empowered with the capacity to perpetuate or neglect power inequalities via representation. Sheltered in artistic freedom, such practices are political performances manifested through ‘heritage’, aimed at creating opportunities for direct experience of the past. Critical analysis of phenomena like Puy du Fou thus interrogates the interpretive sovereignty that specific groups exercise through such politicized reconstruction of historical narratives.
Questioning the Value of Insurance for Wildfire Recovery: Between Absence and Presence

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Abstract

This paper examines the meaning of value, and how it is calculated, among wildfire survivors in Australia. In Australia, fire has shaped culture, traditions and national identity. Yet, the fiery future that is emerging questions people’s ability to insure against growing losses. High-fire-danger days and uncontrollable fire behaviour are increasing as a result of climate change and unsustainable land management practices. More people are building and living in amenity-rich but fire-prone landscapes. A grim picture of un- and under-insurance has already been revealed. Still, some wildfire survivors describe a re-evaluated relationship to material possessions post-fire. This raises questions about what is valuable, and to whom? How can we understand ‘adequate’ insurance levels in more than monetary terms? The paper shows how the difference between the absence and presence of material belongings cannot always be defined by a monetary value replaceable by insurance pay-outs. Rather, it is an emotional presence that continues despite its physical absence. Time, emotional and physical labour are currencies that often hold as much value to survivors as the financial promise of an insurance policy. Yet, these currencies hold little value in the eyes of insurance assessors. The paper concludes that in the context of the material and emotional resources that define people’s complex everyday lives, the value of insurance is what people make it.
Digital activism in spaces of infrastructural struggle: A case of Mexico City's public markets

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Abstract

The use of digital technologies and social media to challenge and champion economic, political, social, and environmental agendas has been on our radar for various decades now (George and Leidner, 2019). With the COVID-19 pandemic, our awareness of these uses drastically increased as people relied more on these tools and social networks to organise and mobilise politically (Sorce and Dumitrica, 2021). While significant attention is paid to how social movements and well-established organisations adopt these technologies and develop practices of digital activism (Barendregt and Schneider, 2020; Dencik and Wilkin, 2019), the digital political life of subaltern groups around infrastructural agendas has remained understudied.

This paper fills this gap by examining the digital activism of small-scale low-income market traders in Mexico City as they defend a 329-public-market network. It draws on my doctoral research (2016-2020) and the preliminary analysis of online interviews with trader leaders (2022) to explain how market traders incorporate digital technologies into their repertoires of contentious collective action. The paper explores how traders have developed different forms of digital literacy at the urban margins, exploited politically multiple digital platforms (e.g. blogs, Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom), and fought against experiences of infrastructural poverty, absence, and failure. Following the traders’ digital journeys, the paper pays special attention to how the digital-political practices of these urban communities have changed, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, when markets around the world closed and the traders’ activities, commercial and otherwise, were suspended. The paper thus examines how marginalised urban communities adapt to voice their demands in times of crisis and advocate for economic and social recovery. This ultimately reveals the traders’ capacity to digitise their traditional grassroots politics and politicise the digital realm by connecting their long-standing infrastructural struggles with new forms of digital activism.
Exploring the recovery of urban greenspace using new forms of spatial big data

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Abstract

While the health and well-being benefits of greenspace have been increasingly recognised, they have taken on even greater significance during the pandemic due to the restrictions imposed on human behaviour, which may form one of the enduring legacies of this time. Current evidence on use of natural spaces is limited and does not easily support site-specific analysis or with fine spatio-temporal distinctions. Coupled with difficulties on primary data gathered throughout the pandemic, there is a general knowledge gap on how changing behaviour has reshaped the use of natural areas and what inequalities have arisen in this dynamic. New forms of mobile phone data, by virtue of the high resolution of spatial and temporal detail, offer enormous potential to help better understand human interactions with greenspace and the changing patterns of use during the pandemic. Through the case study of Glasgow’s open spaces, this research sheds light on the changes in use of urban greenspace using new forms of spatial big data. Utilising a large independent mobile phone application dataset, we explore changes in various aspects of greenspace use, including: the estimated number of visits to greenspace; where people visit greenspace from; length of time spent in greenspace; and spatial patterns of use. Findings provide evidence to help park managers, urban planners, and policymakers better design the recovery and renewal of our cities after the pandemic.
Recovering a future for urban green spaces: a system change experiment in a pandemic

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Abstract

Meadows (1999) suggests systems can be transformed by exploiting ‘leverage points’ where relatively small interventions can result in paradigm shifts. Since 2019, the Future Parks Accelerator programme in the UK has sought to ‘build a sustainable future for the UK’s urban parks and green spaces’. This vision may be understood as an attempt to intervene within the system of greenspace management to achieve transformative change. However, studies of system change suggest the process is unpredictable and contingent. Purposive attempts to effect system change may seek to exploit niches of innovation (Grin, Rotmans & Schot, 2010) but are subject to competing institutional logics (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012) that may frustrate ambitions or lead to unanticipated outcomes.

This paper examines the Future Parks Accelerator in terms of its efforts and achievements in trying to generate system change in seven localities. It compares initial expectations and rhetoric of the scheme with experience over nearly three years, and examines how that experience was inflected by the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, frustrating some hopes but creating unexpected opportunities. As the programme moves towards its conclusion, we consider what can be learned from this attempt to grapple with the complex systems that govern investment in urban green spaces, and how it may inform broader understandings of system change.
Shadowlife: Disorientation Waiting Through Furlough

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Abstract

This paper presents the lived experience of furlough for those with an attachment to work life, who found waiting through furlough disorientating. Furlough was one of the multiplicity of new situations and interruptions to work and home life that the COVID 19 pandemic opened. The suspension of work life for some came as a result of the UK government initiative the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The scheme enabled employers to retain jobs and for staff to be kept on the payroll and be paid not to work or furloughed. It was an unusual state intervention for a UK government. As such, this new world of paid non-work instigated new forms of feeling with the potential for new epistemological opportunities and implications that we are as yet to fully comprehend. The paper draws on thirty five in depth interviews towards building a conceptualisation of disorientation during furlough as a bodily and relational intensity felt spatially, emotionally, temporally and sensorially within the familiar surroundings of the home. Waiting through furlough appears to have been a disorientating period for some of those that experienced it. The paper’s outlining of feelings of spectatorship, disconnection, and anxiety might suggest that furlough was felt negatively by those disorientated by it. And yet, despite the furloughed’s descriptions of feeling “weird” “surreal” and “odd”, they demonstrated that waiting whilst feeling disorientated can lead to better understandings of ourselves and self in relation to others.
Children's Everyday Resilience: Environmental Encounters during Covid 19

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Abstract

This study investigates how local environments and natures, and everyday encounters with these, contribute to children's resilience in diverse urban spaces and geographies. We focus specifically on how these encounters were transformed through children’s daily experiences of the Covid19 pandemic. Drawing on an interdisciplinary approach grounded in critical human geography, politics and IR, we provide novel conceptualisations of everyday, lived resilience, its temporalities and transformations under Covid. We do so through participatory research with children and young people in low income (including informal housing) areas at sites in Turkey, Kenya, Brazil, Pakistan and South Africa. Through analysis of children’s diaries, visual materials, interviews and focus group transcripts, we examine children’s access to and encounters with local environments and natures during the pandemic, and the ways in which these - or their loss and curtailment - were experienced. We highlight the role of environmental access and encounters as part of a suite of mechanisms by which children sustained themselves during Covid 19, and in the context of critical understandings of resilience.
Re-signifying heritage through dancing: a ballet class under the porticoes of Bologna (Italy)

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Abstract

The contents of this paper draw upon an autobiographical experience. Last year, in times of Covid-19, while I was walking under the porticoes of Bologna (Italy), I saw something unusual: a ballet class – with three girls wearing tutus, a ballet teacher, a music keyboard – taking place under the porticoes. I found it fascinating to the extent that this ballet class entailed not only a way of re-signifying the space of the porticoes through dancing, but also a conflation of art (dance) and everyday life. In fact, for both the girls attending the lesson and their teacher this ballet class was an integral part of their weekly or daily routine. They just decided to perform outside, under the porticoes, what they could no longer perform inside, since, during that period, theatres and ballet studios were closed due to the pandemic. The porticoes of Bologna are covered walkways which just in 2021 officially became part of the UNESCO World Heritage List. The conflation of art and everyday practices described above gave new meanings to the space of the porticoes; rather, it was an alternative way of constructing heritage. This conflation – I believe – is a meaningful example of how embodied experiences, such as dancing, can re-signify heritage ‘from below’. Heritage-from-below perspectives (Robertson, 2012; Muzaini and Minca, 2018) are inherently associated with everyday practices as well as with affects and emotions. Hence, this paper, focused on the re-signification of the space of the porticoes through dancing, aims to explore: 1) how the conflation of art and everyday practices may contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of urban heritage; 2) how the re-signification of heritage by virtue of embodied experiences, such as dancing, may challenge and question, but also change in some respects, what has been defined as ‘authorized heritage discourse’ (Smith, 2006).
Feeding the family with a click on an app: the impact of food delivery services on gendered grocery shopping and meal cooking practices over the pandemic

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Abstract

The e-commerce sector boomed during the COVID-19 pandemic: while it represented only 9.4% of retail in France in 2019, and 7.4% in the UK in February of 2020, its share had risen to 13.4% in France and 15.4% in the UK by February of 2021. This sector is not only booming, but also re-structuring around instant delivery services that offer to bring groceries or cooked meals to your doorstep in a matter of minutes. These food and meal delivery companies appear to be targeting time-strained urban households by offering to lift the weight of daily routines. Buying and cooking food is a key dimension of care, and one that is mostly taken on by women. Food-related domestic tasks put a strain on women's time resources. Due to these unequally shared domestic responsibilities, women have been particularly affected by remote work, school closures, and the general hardships of the pandemic. This research endeavours to connect these two dimensions of the pandemic by exploring the following question: How have food delivery services impacted households’ food-related task sharing practices over the pandemic? To answer this question, the authors surveyed a representative sample of 2000 respondents in Paris and London. The survey explores the following themes: how do women’s and men’s use, and perception of food delivery service compare? How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the gendered task-sharing practices related to grocery shopping and meal preparation activities? What could be the enduring social and environmental consequences of these changes?
‘A powerful impression upon the senses’: Haptic experiences at the Cornish coast, 1850-1910

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Abstract

As the region’s mining industry collapsed in the late nineteenth century, coastal spaces became increasingly important to Cornwall’s economy and geographical identity, upheld both internally by prominent fishing communities and externally as travel to coastal towns and rural areas gained commercial traction. Central to the lived histories of these coastal landscapes, are the physical interactions that take place between the sensing body and the material environment. Hapticity is often considered the most proximate, tangible, and direct physical interaction between landscape and body. John Wylie has explored the haptic experiences involved in navigating the South-West Coastal Path in a contemporary context (2005), but how have bodies cohered with these landscapes in an historical context?

Whether fisherpeople working the coast, artists painting it, naturalists studying it, or pedestrian tourists walking it, locals and visitors inhabited and interacted with these spaces for differing purposes. Each thus developed unique forms of knowledge about the landscape, unfolding through haptic experiences which were often dependent on the habitual regularity of physical contact with and previous exposure to the space. This paper will explore how these differing knowledges cohered in the context of the coast, contributing both to representations of Cornish geography and to historical actors’ understandings of and attitudes towards their own bodies, which were often constructed relationally. By taking a sensory approach to historical geographies of the South-West, this paper will demonstrate the importance of prioritising the sensing body when examining human-environmental relationships.
Speculating about a Medieval Landscape

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Abstract

A 9th century sculpted stone cross was formerly sited on top of a hill in Renfrewshire, Scotland, moved there by a late 18th century landowner to enchant the viewpoint and install an ancient fixture as part of a project of romantic landscaping. Accounting for the creation of this picturesque landmark is not unfamiliar, since we remain heirs to a picturesque landscape aesthetic, which is embedded in contemporary appraisals and apprehensions of rurality. However, the cross was formerly sited in a wooded glen some 500 metres from the hill, placed there during the reign of the obscure Strathclyde kingdom. To account for how the cross was understood and felt in this early medieval landscape is much more intellectually challenging, for there are few textual clues about its significance. Accordingly I explore how the composition of a speculative account that draws on scraps from historical accounts and auto-ethnographic sensory and affective encounters might offer an imaginative response to this deeply unfamiliar time and space.
Understanding the legacy of Warrington New Town’s urban forest experiment (1968 to 2022).

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Abstract

My proposed paper draws upon my findings researching Warrington New Town Development Corporation’s (WNTDC) archive and carrying out in-depth interviews with former staff of WNTDC and current residents. Warrington New Town represents a unique experiment in the UK in building residential settlements in an urban forest. Warrington was designated as a Partnership New Town in 1968, this entailed expanding the existing town by creating four new residential areas to the West, South and East. One such area is Birchwood, with a population of around 11,000 people, houses sit amidst a now densely wooded landscape. It represents the fullest expression of the WNTDC’s deputy landscape architect Robert Tregay’s vision of an English version of the Dutch Heempark (Homes in parkland). The construction of Birchwood represented an experiment in what Tregay termed the “Ecological Planning Approach”, a philosophy and style of landscape design, elements of which have since become mainstream ideals in planning green settlements.

Birchwood’s first residents moved in around the mid-1970s. My research has been attempting to capture the factors that have most affected how the original design philosophy shapes everyday life for the residents of Birchwood, and for those charged with maintaining a dense woodland. This paper will argue that whilst accepted understandings of the health benefits of ‘nature on your doorstep’ undoubtedly forms part of residents sense of place in Birchwood, and their everyday interaction with the landscape, a range of forces now act upon the contemporary urban forest of Birchwood which capture institutional pressures of austerity, personal safety, aesthetic notions of attractive landscape as well as the legacy of the original design principles. A deeper understanding of these forces allows us to consider the points of convergence and divergence between conceived and lived space.
Dynamics of Cities in Urban Wargames

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Abstract

Wargames and other 'serious games' provide a means to think through concepts and plans for addressing potential crises and gaps in capability. In wargames of conflict, two sides exchange actions, reactions, and counter-reactions. While this approach enables assessment of operations under uncertainty, it becomes increasingly insufficient when large numbers of non-combatants are present and when the environment is degraded over time. This presentation describes analytic support for games in which 'the city' is given its own turn. Perspective for the city's multifaceted actions is provided by adaptations to the Political-Military-Economic-Social-Infrastructure-Information (PMESII) framework, which was developed to characterize environments for military operations. As initially conceived and conventionally used, each of the six variable categories provides a description of the structural features in a given area. While there can be implicit recognition of connections between categories, there is no explicit method or guidance to consider important interrelationships. Such connections can be especially important in urban systems under conflict- or disaster-related stress. Work to transform the PMESII framework was undertaken in the context of the NATO Urbanization Project to improve understanding of existing conditions and to anticipate potential consequences of actions and events. It has subsequently been used to support learning through ongoing wargames. Three steps are taken to modify the framework. First, the PMESII variables are redefined from asking structural inventory questions to asking functional questions. The redefinitions include spatial and temporal considerations of the functions. Second, functional relationships between the fifteen pairwise relationship between the six primary variables are introduced. Third, three triplets of variables are offered as a basis to consider the ways open, complex, and emergent urban systems are ordered. The revised framework has been used as a basis to think through second- and third-order effects of system disruption during conflict or natural disaster.
The production of everyday risks and limits to local risk governance in Kathmandu

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Abstract

Nepal is exposed to multiple hazard risks including floods, landslides, earthquakes and climatic instability, making living with risk an everyday reality for most Nepalis. In recent years, Nepal has seen a restructuring of risk governance with a decentralisation of responsibility for disaster risk management in national policy. Decentralised risk management in Kathmandu is limited because local government, with weak capacity and resources, is tasked with addressing complex, intersecting, multi-hazard risks produced by large-scale urban development trajectories over which it has little control. This paper argues that despite this ostensive commitment to decentralisation, current urban trajectories are increasing rather than reducing everyday risk. The paper demonstrates how multi-scale urban processes through unplanned urban expansion, haphazard constructional activities, land speculation, spreading new settlements and market centres in city peripheries, produce variegated societies differentially exposed to risk and simultaneously reproduce new risks. The paper advances a definition of everyday risk that includes direct natural hazard risk but also incorporates its intersection with other forms of social, economic, political, and cultural precarity, that are produced at and across multiple scales. This includes decreasing greenery, disrupting cultural spaces, and increasing antagonistic sentiments among local and migrant settlers. Although these risks surface and are experienced by peripheral communities in their everyday lives, and hence are felt to be ‘local’, the production of everyday risks occurs through multi-scale processes and relations – the solutions to which cannot be found at a single scale. The paper engages scholarship on the politics of scale to problematise a “scaled” way of thinking about risk. Institutions may operate at fixed scales, but risks do not. The paper calls for policy interventions that recognise the complex web of multi-scale processes through which everyday risk is produced, and empower local institutions to have a voice in addressing root causes through risk-sensitive urban development planning.
Abyssal Geographies

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Abstract

Today, we are held to live in the Anthropocene, bringing to an end binary imaginaries, such as the separation between Human and Nature, and with them Western modernist assumptions of progress, linear causality and human exceptionalism. Much Western critical theory, from new or vital materialism to post- and more-than-human thinking, unsurprisingly reflects this internal crisis of faith in Eurocentric or Enlightenment modernity and modern reasoning. As the same time, a radically different critique of modernity has also gained prominence in recent years, emerging from critical Black studies, which instead places the Caribbean at the epicentre of the development of a new mode critical thought. In attempting to grasp what it is about Caribbean thought and practice that has enabled a distinctively new, alternative non-Eurocentric imaginary, this paper heuristically sets out a paradigm of what we call ‘abyssal thought’. This has two key aspects which are drawn out and clarified. The first is that abyssal thought is not grounded in abstract philosophical critique but works through the history of the Caribbean as an affirmative resource to be drawn upon. Aspects of Caribbean life, of resistance and survival – the Middle Passage, Plantation, marronage, carnival, calypso and creolisation, for examples – have become generalisable as the abyssal paradigm gathers momentum, challenging the foundations and central tenets of dominant Eurocentric modes of contemporary critical thought. The second key aspect is that, unlike many other influential approaches in Geography today, abyssal work engages the legacies of modernity and coloniality by explicitly seeking to be escape the binds of ontology; suspending and negating the modern project of the human and the world. Key for abyssal approaches is that the world is inseparable from the violence that forged the anti-black modernist ontology of ‘human as subject’ and ‘world as object’. Thus, for abyssal work, the task is not to remake the human, by thinking and acting differently, but that of refusal: unmaking or undoing the world.
"On the mountain, the world is still ok": How ‘nature’ was experienced as a personal resource during the pandemic

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Abstract

How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected sense of nature, what role did perceived ‘nature spaces’ play in mental and physical recovery from the ruptures of the crisis, and how did local pandemic policies shape these processes for different groups? Based on a longitudinal, qualitative multi-method study that investigated the effects of the pandemic on young adults’ emotional connections to nature, we argue that their feelings about nature shifted through the pandemic. We accompanied 98 young adults in Innsbruck, Austria remotely over this period with the help of written narratives and mobile instant messaging interviews. Through qualitative discourse and content analysis of the multi-media material that resulted from this exercise, we elaborate on how the expressions of these participants related to nature evolved over the course of the pandemic. Starting with the ruptures of the first Austrian lockdown in spring 2020 and reaching into its relaxation in summer 2020, the loss of nature experiences was grieved just as escapes into nature were euphorically celebrated. Nature as the place where “the world is still ok” was strongly contrasted with the insecurity of pandemic life. Yet positive reactions to nature encounters also faded during follow-up lockdowns which were less harshly policed, less fully adhered to, and perceived less as social ruptures. We debate the reasons for these shifts in ‘senses of nature’ and what they tell us about how nature ‘connections’ are contextually produced.
Antimicrobial resistance as a productive toxicity assemblage. The example of medium scale poultry farming in rural South India.

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Abstract

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) challenges our understanding of toxicity in numerous ways. One challenge is an ontological one: It operates as a ‘reverse toxicity’. Resistant microbes are (more) ‘toxic’ to humans only after they have developed resistance (as an evolutionary response) to the toxins that were originally created to be used against them. More manifestly problematic is the indication that the toxicity of AMR is ‘productive’: it is a living, mutating assemblage consisting not only of the enzymes that trigger the actual resistances, but also of all the actors that stimulate and world it within situated ecologies.

Building on ethnographic fieldwork in rural India, this paper assesses local(ized) practices of antibiotic use in multispecies contexts. The example of medium-scale industrial poultry farming shows that the relevant stakeholders lack awareness of cyclical processes, which may prompt the development of resistance.

Adding antibiotics to the drinking water for growth promotion and infection prevention leads to their (metabolites) depositing in the bedding. Upon completion of the production cycle, the bedding is used as a fertilizer in the fields right next to the barn, where biologically active pharmaceutical remnants seep into soil and groundwater, the latter of which is being pumped up to be used as drinking water not only by the poultry, but also the farmers – perpetuating and intensifying the cycle.

This research indicates that AMR toxicity is not only productive in itself (through mutations), but has to be produced through the stimulus of an antibiotic. Dilution and time/decay often decrease the toxicity of a substance – in the case of AMR, it seems to be the opposite: antibiotics force a microbial organism to adapt to its toxic environment, which prompts mutations that can eventually render the toxin/pharmakon less effective and the microbes more ‘toxic’ and less treatable to a host body.
Symbolism of meat distribution and eating practices: A case of the Sumi Naga tribe of Northeast India

Lovitoli Jimo
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Abstract

Food is an integral part for the survival of human civilization and certain food items are associated with community or tribal identity. ‘Societies use systems of classification to regulate their internal and external relations’ (Fiddes, 1991:2), where meat is one of the ways of categorising relations among family, clans, community etc. The distribution and consumption of meat marks the special social relations, rituals, festivals and celebrations etc. Festivals and celebrations are an integral part of community living among the Sumi tribe of Nagaland, where slaughtering, distributing and consuming meat is an important part of the celebration and in making meanings.

Feasting and fasting is an important part of community identity which is practiced through the exchange of food items and cuisines, such as the distribution of meat. Meat pieces are exchanged through the hosting of a feast for the village in the form of the ‘Feast of Merit’ in the past, and presently ‘Christmas feast,’ marriage, and other celebrations and festivities etc. Meat pieces are not just used for consumption as food but it has deep symbolic and social meanings in maintaining social order in the family and community which is gendered. This paper will look at the politics of relations through the distribution of relevant meat portions according to its relation based of age, gender, marital status, degree of relations etc., and the complex power relations within it.
A case study on the Tangkhul Naga LUIRIM KACHON and also its cultural assimilation with the Meitei community

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Abstract

Traditional dresses are emblems of allegiance, marking the person out as belonging to a discrete cultural unit and often indicate a person’s standing within the community. Clothing are far more than mere protection- its designs & its functional values – conveys, communicates, identifies the individual and community, signalling tribal affiliation; marking the occasions – of rites and ritual ceremony and of the seasons of the year. Luirim kachon is one of the most remarkable Tangkhul traditional shawl, signifying a very respectable social status in the society, it is an exclusive men’s wear, entitled for the royals and meritorious. A study of textile reveals an intricate history and culture of a people or the region or a nation. Presentation on Luirim textile will give a glimpse into the rich art and culture of the Tangkhul community as expressed in the textile through its design motifs, adding meanings to their history and their rich cultural heritage.
Northeastern Restaurants in Delhi

Betsame Lamar
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Abstract

The multiculturalism of India is reflected through its capital city of New Delhi. As a melting pot, the city is replete with migrants who create lifeworlds of their own. To the contrary, some of these cultures are dominantly excluded from what is accepted as normative. For instance, due to the complex history of racialised encounters and blatant ignorance of the past, cultures of indigenous peoples from the (foot) hills of Northeast India are marginalised to the extent that the migrants become subjects of racial abuse and discrimination. This differential treatment extends to the food that these migrants consume. In this context then, my paper proposes to examine the construction of ‘Northeastern Restaurants’ in the city of New Delhi and argues that it is a beneficial site where indigenous identities are (re)generated. Additionally, it posits how through the generation of knowledge, the restaurants resist marginalisation and transform our understanding of Northeastern Foodways in the city.
System of signs and the state: On Sociality of memes

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Abstract

Suanmuanlian Tonsing’s paper examines how indigenous people in spaces of sociocultural, historical, and political exploitation produce their idea of the state through memes in social media. His online ethnographic exploration contributes to the century-old debates on the state by examining the state within sign systems. For him, studying the problem of understanding the state through memes as sign systems among the social media users of the Paite community (during elections) enables one to see the complexities of unearthing layers of meaning attributed to the state in a given geopolitical space. His study gives insights on the indigenous insider view of the state in South Asia generally, and specifically the highlanders in India’s Northeast, and contributes to the neglected scholarship on indigenous mediascape.
A new framework to identify most suitable priority areas for soil-water conservation using coupling mechanism in Guwahati urban watershed, India, with future insight

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Abstract

The urban watershed of Guwahati is one of India's most densely populated areas. The city located on both banks of the Brahmaputra river is a disaster hotspot and the largest urban and financial centre of northeastern India. Thus, this work aimed to find the most suitable soil-water conservation areas at a micro-scale level in Guwahati, a hilly city. First, the PCA was used to create a sub-watershed priority model based on 19 morphometric parameters. Next, we quantified the soil erosion using RUSLE for current and future scenarios based on the minimum and maximum GHG concentrations in the atmosphere (RCP2.5 and 8.5). We also proposed the fuzzy logic-based soil-water potential conservation (SWPC) model for current and future scenarios. Finally, the most suitable soil-water conservation areas for current and future scenarios have been identified using the coupling coordination model (CCD). As per the authors' knowledge, this is the first comprehensive study that identifies the most suitable conservation areas by analyzing numerous hydro-geological models. As a result, sub-watersheds, including Silsako, Bharalu, Deepor Beel, and North Guwahati, were identified as high priority zones. According to the current RUSLE model, soil erosion in the research region varies from 140 to 181.64 tonnes/ha/year. The present SWPC model predicted 46.92 km² of high and 54.40 km² of very high suitable zones. Furthermore, due to increased soil erosion intensity, the area covered by the high and very high SWPC under RCP 2.5 and RCP 8.5 will expand in the future. According to the CCDM results, Bharalu, Deepor Beel, and North-Guwahati have very high to medium coupling degrees, making them the most suitable areas for conservation. The present study's findings will provide substantial assistance to local government and experts for long-term soil-water resource management and will effectively address environmental degradation problems in urban watersheds across the globe.
‘Trees untangle your mind’: An arts-based enquiry into pandemic use and valuation of an urban treescape

Alice Goodenough\textsuperscript{1}, Kerry Morrison\textsuperscript{2}, Jasmine Black\textsuperscript{1}, Julie Urquhart\textsuperscript{1}, Clive Potter\textsuperscript{3}, Paul Courtney\textsuperscript{1}

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Abstract

The pandemic has highlighted issues of inequitable access to greenspace and its support of wellbeing and good health, particularly links between socio-economic status, ethnicity and green-space deprivation. Given the enduring nature of health inequalities in the UK and the potential of greenspace to help address these, it is vital research continues to investigate the experience of green space use with people from a wide range of social, generational and cultural backgrounds. This paper explores the process and results of arts-based research focused on a community’s engagement with an urban park’s treed landscape in Manchester during spring/summer 2021. The socially engaged arts approaches employed captured observations of a broad range of people’s interactions with the human and non-human, whilst opening up an inclusive space for respondents to reflect on and share feelings about these connections and their value. The methods employed attracted a number of ‘quieter voices’ to participate, particularly more vulnerable park users. This case study research highlights both the significant role of the park treescape in supporting people to feel ok during the Covid-19 crisis, their cultural associations and ties to it, but also their simultaneous concern for and lack of influence over a valued resource. It attends to the multiple levels at which people connected with treescapes during this time, from less conscious material engagements to more emotionally and culturally driven transactions, whilst identifying the threat to these connections from the uncertain future of the greenspace and stakeholders lack of agency in securing what they value from it.
Prickliness, outspokenness and anti-fascism: the parrhesiastic geographies of Lucio Gambi

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Abstract

From Ancient Greece to Foucault’s (and post-Foucault’s) studies, parrhesia has been used as a quite polysemous term to be applied to a plurality of cases, reflecting somehow the ambiguity of several Foucauldian notions which, addressing the level of discursive formation, can be filled at each time with potentially different and even contrasting political contents. In this paper, I propose a political understanding of parrhesia grounded on the principles of nonconformism, anti-authoritarianism and antifascism. I do that by addressing an empirical case from the repertory of ‘other geographical traditions’, namely works of Italian critical and antifascist geographer Lucio Gambi (1920-2006).

Analysing his published writings and unpublished archives I reconstruct how, from the 1950s to the 1970s, Gambi was not afraid of facing unpopularity among several academic mandarins of Italian geography, due to his intransigent positions about the permanence in the discipline of people who were compromised with the fascist regime from the 1920s to the 1940s. Gambi publicly denounced the problematic past of some individuals alongside their positivistic and conservative approaches to geography. As his recently-opened archives show, Gambi even organised some of a ‘filing’ work to document former racist and filo-fascist writings of his adversaries, giving radical and anti-fascist political contents to parrhesiastic notions of ‘fearless speech’ and ‘telling the truth’.
Consenting To Everyday Propinquities Onboard the Bus during the Covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

This paper will examine experiences of bus passengers during the COVID-19 pandemic, tracing the intimate bodily encounters, everyday anxieties, and practical negotiations of those travelling onboard buses with unknown human and nonhuman (microbial) others. It draws on ethnographic observations on buses and semi-structured interviews with bus users, cleaners, and drivers from multilingual communities in Bristol and Southampton, in 2021. I explore the changing affordances (between passengers, bus architecture, microbial worlds) in the performance of infection prevention habits, unwritten passenger codes of conduct, and material bodily cultures formed in response to shifting perceived risk and anxieties of the virus and governmental public health guidance. The paper is interested in the microbial imaginaries that emerged and gained currency, as people were learning to share the world with nonhuman agents (Sars-CoV-2) within a ‘microbial landscape’ that they could neither see nor scientifically understand. I consider what it was like to be a passenger during the crisis and the ordinary, everyday negotiations enacted. I draw on Berlant’s ‘theories of attachment’ (2011) to address the complex feelings generated in and around the bus travelling space. These feelings include aversion, ambivalence and care that shaped whether to, or when to travel, and responses to strategies implemented by bus operators or bus users to maximise safety (seat occupation, mask wearing, hand hygiene, ventilation). I conclude with a call for critical consideration of the everyday experiences of public health and infection prevention within public transport spaces, and for the differentiated experiences of risk in relation to Sars-CoV-2 and future health challenges.
Abstract

The analysis of COVID-19’s gendered impacts on women have focused on negative livelihood impacts, increases in gender based violence, and decreases in workplace representation. This narrow lens on the domestic and livelihood spheres tends to overlook the large implications of the [ALS(1)] pandemic on women’s public participation and in particular on collective women’s movements and the achievement of associated goals. This research provides a preliminary analysis of the role of COVID-19 in delaying or de-prioritising the (re)institutionalisation of women’s rights in Sudan. Based on semi-structured interviews with people working on gender topics within Sudan held in the fall of 2021, findings indicate that the COVID impacted the achievement of movement aims in two ways. First, the pandemic stalled reforms by reducing governmental capacity to fifty percent: with more limited capacity and competing priorities, the reforms promised by transitional leadership were delayed. Second, the cacophony of other impacts—increases in sexual and gender-based violence, limitations on public participation, and institutional closures—repressed grassroots level activity and stalled momentum. Collectively, these two factors and other ongoing crises interrupted institutionalisation of reforms. We apply a critical feminist geopolitical lens exploring the ways in which collective security specifically around public health and safety came at a cost to the long term security of women living in a patriarchal state. In our analysis, we draw attention to the ways in which these outcomes were both inadvertent and intended for the better good, while simultaneously perpetuating and legislating power structures that exclude female participation and opportunities for representation with impacts for women’s rights more broadly. In our conclusion we point to potential examples of similar ‘delayed’ achievements of women’s rights from other contexts.
Speaking truth to power: parrhesia and the politics of presence

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Abstract

Wikipedia identifies speaking truth to power with parrhesia, and this understanding of free or frank speech has become associated both with Foucault’s work and activism. However, as others have noted, Foucault’s conception accords neither with political theory in its classical or critical forms, nor perhaps with the political idioms of contemporary activism, such as the demand to speak (or to be silent). This paper offers as an example a reading of Bram Buscher’s recent The Truth about Nature (2020), where the notion of speaking truth to power (or alternatively, speaking nature to power) is a problematic refrain. This paper argues that we need to make parrhesia strange again, and it does this through a consideration of the metaphysics and politics of presence invoked by the concept and practice of parrhesia. On the one hand, ‘having the guts to say the right thing at the right moment’ (Dyrberg, 2014) suggests a direct, immediate and localised encounter between the truthteller and the political authority, but the latter has truthtelling responsibilities too, as part of a political culture invested in building up political capital between authorities and laypeople. With regard to this mediating political culture, this is not (just) about the event of speech, but of the play of discourse or language, the ‘game’ that parrhesia represents. ‘Game’ here might be interpreted in a Gadamerian fashion, which suggests a more conservative reading of politics and tradition, or in the radical hermeneutics of Derrida. Even more radical forms of political confrontation do not in practice subscribe to the confusion of presence with truth, making the notion of ‘speaking truth to power’ less logocentric in its geography and more ecstatic in its temporalities, where parousia rather than parrhesia may be the more appropriate reference.
This paper tests two propositions. The first is that parrhesiastic (courageous, risk-taking ways of embodying one’s truth) acts can constitute governmentality which they automatically problematise. The second is that it is useful to approach anticolonialism as a such a parrhesiastic governmentality because it enables us to link anticolonial episteme (conceptualisations of truth, violence, and the political), identities (emergent subjectivities and lives), visions (conceptualising and planning space), techne (mobilising people and targeting spaces) and ethos (relations between elite and subaltern groups). This approach will be used to explore the geographies of Indian National Congress-led interwar Indian anticolonial mass movements, which encouraged disobedience but also tried to discipline it into non-violent and non-revolutionary channels. During the Quit India movement of 1942-43 a third Delhi, invisible but real, was strung together through networks of courageous risk-taking and violent attacks under the two cities of New and Old Delhi. Being a hidden city it did, however, depend upon people lying, the very opposite of Gandhi’s commitment to truth, non-violence, and openness.
Rethinking geographies of precarity: female migrant workers building lives in China

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Abstract

This paper advances recent engagement by geographers with theories of precarity. Drawing on ethnographic research focused on female construction workers in China, we critically engage with the everyday lives of migrant workers living and working in interstitial spaces in the city by discussing resistance and examples of oppositional consciousness; resilience and strategies of endurance that our research respondents adopt to facilitate their day-to-day living; and finally; we unpack the ways in which the female builders who took part in our study rework the conditions of their everyday life. In doing so, we signpost fruitful opportunities at the intersection of a number of geographical research agendas including, migration, labour/employment, in/formalities, and work/home by paying attention to modes of being, becoming and subjectivities-in-formation which generate new critical insights into the complex ways people respond to, and shape, relations of power, in and through their daily lives.
The demands of displacement, the micro-aggressions of multiculturalism: Performing an idea of "Indianness" in Singapore

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Abstract

This paper will explore the ways in which state-defined discourses of multiculturalism can unintentionally create a framework through which micro-aggressions are enacted against those interpreted as “other”. These definitions cascade down from the state to majority and then minority ethno-national groups, who leverage positions of relative dominance to establish the terms of acceptance and integration into society. By negotiating these terms, ethnicity becomes a performative construct through which difference is asserted and reified, and through which precarity is reproduced. I illustrate these ideas through an empirical analysis of Singapore’s minority Indian community, and how Singaporean Indians perform an idea of “Indianness” in response to their Singaporean Chinese fellow citizens on the one hand, and their migrant Indian counterparts on the other. These performances are disjunctive insofar as one rests on them being subject to micro-aggressions vis-à-vis the Chinese majority, the other on them perpetrating micro-aggressions against Indian non-national minorities. Reconciling these positions reveals the normalisation of difference, and the micro-aggressions they give rise to, throughout everyday life.
Obedient speech or fearless speech? The problems of positionality and context in parrhesia

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Abstract

Scholars working in authoritarian settings can usually discern when we are hearing obedient speech (i.e. speech that conforms to officially-sanctioned political scripts) or fearless speech (i.e. speech that refuses sanctioned scripts). For Michel Foucault, fearless speech, or parrhesia, is “linked to courage in the face of danger: it demands the courage to speak the truth in spite of some danger” (Foucault 2001, 16). Yet in any society, some people are more at risk for their speech than others, while the context in which speech acts are performed is equally uneven. In authoritarian settings, the same people who might be a parrhesiastes in one place are often quick to engage in obedient speech in another. Likewise, certain speakers in authoritarian environments have the privilege to act as truth-tellers, whereas the positionality of others does not enable this. In his extensive writing on parrhesia, it is clear that Foucault was aware of these issues, although liberal assumptions about “free speech” tend not to emphasize these contextual (Koch 2013). Highlighting positionality and context, this paper considers Foucault’s distinction between a “performative utterance” and parrhesia – the former producing expected effects where the latter “opens the situation and makes possible effects which are, precisely, not known” (Foucault 2010, 62). I show how parrhesia opens important questions about the political construction of obedient speech and fearless speech through space and time – and in liberal and illiberal settings alike.
Wild immunology and probiotic parenting: The microbiopolitics of microbial health

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Abstract

This paper traces the rise and the significance of ‘wild immunology’: a new paradigm of immunological theory and research that figures the host organism as comprised of, embedded within, and dependent on its exposure to an ecosystem of microbes. Wild immunology interfaces with an emerging ‘probiotic’ (Lorimer 2020) or ‘post-Pasteurian’ (Paxson 2012) approach to health and hygiene that aims to choreograph host-microbial interactions through the human life course, differentiating between undesirable germs and desirable forms of exposure and transmission. We explore the social and political implications of this model as it comes to inform normative aspirations towards probiotic, ‘natural’ childbirth and probiotic parenting, in which parents – especially women – are made responsible for ensuring the intergenerational reproduction of the healthy microbiome. The paper draws on a review of the popular science texts and government and civil society advice that translate the insights of wild immunology into guidance for current and prospective parents in the UK. We first examine the ‘microbiopolitics’ (Paxson 2012) through which parents and children are made subject to wild immunological knowledge, focusing on the logics and practices of a dirty governmentality that makes individual microbial responsibility the locus of health. We then critically examine the political and economic relations that configure the unequal geography of who is able to take responsibility for microbial health and probiotic immune system modulation. The conclusion identifies the different trajectories that this probiotic turn in parenting might follow.
Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester: Utilising qualitative methodologies to develop meaningful insights into road space reallocations

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Abstract

Road space reallocation, involving the design and implementation of schemes that reallocate space away from motor vehicles and improving conditions for walking, cycling, and using public transport, are central to UK goals of decarbonising transport and achieving net-zero. Within the UK, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are a growing form of road space reallocation, with implementation accelerated during Covid-19 and the provision of emergency active travel funding. The evidence so-far on LTNs demonstrates them as a valuable intervention with positive impacts upon levels of active travel. Despite this, LTNs are commonly considered as a divisive intervention and local authorities experience difficulties in implementing them. Focusing upon four case study LTNs in Greater Manchester, this research demonstrates both the value of utilising qualitative methodologies to develop insights into LTNs, and of expanding research beyond London, providing reflections upon how LTNs could be developed to ensure they are more equitable, effective, and acceptable interventions of road space reallocation.
Using Neighbourhood Plans to Decarbonise Local Transport

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Abstract

This research explores the ways in which neighbourhood planning (NP) as a statutory development plan can offer place-based, community-led solutions to decarbonise local travel choices and transport infrastructure. NP was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 as part of the statutory development plan to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for the development and growth of their neighbourhood areas. Since its introduction, NP has been proved to be very popular: with 2882 neighbourhood areas designated and 1292 plans having passed local referenda to become part of statutory development plans for their local area (as of November 2021). However, there is a paucity of research on the incorporation of sustainable mobility into NP and to examine the types of transport issues a neighbourhood plan can address. This research uses Carnforth, a small market town in Lancashire, as a pilot to explore the ways in which sustainable transport can be integrated into the development of a neighbourhood plan. It uses co-production and theory of change as methods to help create the conditions in which communities can identify practical ways to be empowered to integrate sustainable transport policies into their built environment and lifestyles and lead change to a just transition to lower carbon futures from a bottom-up perspective. The overarching consensus from this research is that the development of planning policies in a neighbourhood plan can contribute to the decarbonisation of local transport. With rapidly evolving technologies and new ideas, neighbourhood areas can act as testbeds where real change could be made. To help communities, the authors of this report have created a toolkit to decarbonise local transport via neighbourhood plans, suggesting detailed strategies to adopt sustainable transport policies in neighbourhood plans and providing good practice examples.
Sir Rutherford Alcock, RGS president and geographer of bakumatsu Japan

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Abstract

Sir Rutherford Alcock (1809-1897) was president of the RGS from 1876 to 1878. When being sounded out for the position, he said he only had a ‘very slight claim’ to be considered a geographer. In fact, the president at the time did not need to be much of one and he had a similar sort of background to others who held the post, being the retired British Minister to Japan (1859-1865) and China (1865-1870).

It is true that he had no formal qualifications as a geographer but he was a sensitive observer of what he saw and much of what he wrote was penetrating and surprisingly accurate. He was a classic Victorian amateur making notes on things like natural history, geology, architecture, the customs of the people etc. He was an energetic traveller in Japan – in addition to the normal visits of the Minister to ports by ship, he took a mostly overland journey from Nagasaki to Edo (Tokyo) and an excursion to Mt Fuji, which he was the first Westerner to climb.

He was there during the last years of the Shoguns’ regime (the bakumatsu) when the nation was backward and feudal. It was also on the edge; frequent disasters – fire, flood, typhoon, earthquake – mixed with a violent and volatile body politic. It was a cocktail of peril that well fits this conference’s theme and this paper will look at Alcock’s experiences and observations through that prism.
Thriving Greenspaces for Wellbeing: the experiences of greenspace users in London during the Pandemic

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Abstract

Our research examined the ways in which park users in London derived wellbeing from greenspaces during the pandemic. These spaces have been one of the few environments where people in Britain have been able to exercise, seek solace and maintain limited social contact - emphasising just how vital parks and greenspaces are for public health. The work focused upon the lived experiences of disadvantaged and minority groups who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. One of the study’s key findings was the importance of parks’ ‘Friends Groups’ and other community organisations in mediating people’s experience with greenspaces. The research also underlined the fact that greenspaces are more than simply ‘green’. As well as being valued for their naturalness, they also perform a social function. Greenspaces serve as a location for social care, identity-making and belonging. During periods of lockdown, urban park spaces and other green areas became crucial community ‘places’ that play an important role in supporting individuals and groups with diverse needs. Another finding suggests that people used a range of greenspaces to meet their wellbeing needs during the pandemic, and this underscores the importance of supporting a mixed portfolio of accessible parks with different facilities. But it was not only formal parks that played a significant role in facilitating wellbeing during the pandemic. In addition, people made use of cemeteries, waste ground and sometimes created their own pockets of greenspace in previously unused or overlooked corners of the city. These spaces became valuable places to seek refuge, to re/connect safely or to enjoy the sensory stimulation of being outdoors. This research established the significance of formal, accessible urban greenspaces; but also of affording opportunities for greenspaces to be curated, created, or appropriated by communities to meet their own specific needs, in their own ways.
Stakeholders’ perception of pedestrian-focused interventions to encourage walking as a mode of transport for short-distance trips

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Abstract

The incidence of the COVID-19 pandemic has spurred local authorities to act on encouraging active travel through the implementation of pedestrian-only streets and redesigning of public spaces. This research aims to understand the impact pedestrian intervention can have on minimising the barriers that discourage walking as a mode of transport for short-distance trips, through the analysis of stakeholders’ perceptions. Within the context of the car-dependent, Euro-Mediterranean Island of Malta, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the relevant stakeholders; governmental entities, non-governmental organisations, private entities, and higher education institutions to identify the current challenges and opportunities in the islands’ walking environment. Each of the stakeholders will have the opportunity to propose an idea for a pedestrian-focused intervention in a local urban space. These ideas will be further developed in a virtual urban living lab which will seek the community’s views, and on which, users can provide feedback as well as submit their own ideas. The coded qualitative data collected will provide a basis for the discussion of preliminary findings to shed light on the potential challenges associated with implementing pedestrian-focused interventions within urban spaces that encourage active travel for short-distance trips. The policy-relevant outcomes of the study are sustained by the direct feedback and input from citizens and local stakeholders, emphasising their key role in creating sustainable, thriving urban neighbourhoods.
Thriving publics? An inquiry into the contestation of LTN trials in London

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Abstract

The accelerated introduction of low-traffic neighborhood (LTN) schemes in London and across the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic has spurred heated online debates, petition campaigns to abort the schemes, a proliferation of pro- and anti-LTN flyers and posters, and numerous protests at local council buildings and town halls. Through the case study of a trial LTN in the borough of Islington, London, this paper explores the conflicts that arise when various public goods—environmental sustainability, road safety, mobility, and social justice—intersect in programs of urban transformation. How do publics assemble and mobilise around such issues? What concerns (material, symbolic, political) have compelled certain individuals or groups to act? How do they give weight to one set of goods or ideals over another, and what role do affect and emotion play in this? What arguments or justifications tend to prevail in the public debate, and for what reasons (are some publics more vocal and more efficient at organizing themselves? Are some arguments truly more relevant than others?). Importantly, do some aspects of the problem remain invisible to those making the decisions or trying to influence the decision? In other words, what aspects of the problem are overlooked and what populations are marginalized in the debates over LTNs? This paper draws on early stages of doctoral research to trace the contours of these issues.
Precarity from the point of view of social reproduction

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Abstract

Precarity has often been defined as the absence of security or certainty of various elements required to satisfy basic human needs. These elements include issues such as income, work, and housing. In geographic research, the absence of these stable relations is often the starting point to study the consequences of experienced precarity. In this paper, I propose to take human needs and their satisfaction as the starting point for investigation. To do this, I build on social reproduction theory and develop the concept of depletion. Thereby, I propose conceptual tools to investigate livelihoods and to what extent these can satisfy the basic social reproductive needs of individuals, households and communities. I argue that such a research approach opens up avenues of analysis to identify human needs, the strategies people employ to satisfy them, and the barriers and opportunities they experience to do so. This approach can break out of the mould of studying precarity as absence and instead approach it as a set of barriers towards strategies to (un)succesfully engage in social reproduction. Applying a social reproduction lens to results from an intergenerational poverty in the Netherlands, I will present a research agenda around spatialised social reproduction. The benefit of this approach is that it both illuminates uncertain relations to basic needs and identifies ways in which social reproduction strategies can be supported from a human needs based perspective.
The social and physical construction of an emergency food parcel

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Abstract

The provision of emergency food aid through food banks has become a necessity for those experiencing food poverty in recent years. Research on emergency food parcels in the UK has primarily focused on the nutritional content of food parcels demonstrating their nutritional adequacy. However, there is a lack of research that exists on the place-based processes involved when constructing a food parcel and the intersection between food bank practices and household dietary practices.

An ethnographic study was conducted in the London Borough of Brent and in Portsmouth. Data collection involved participant observations and interviews with 23 volunteers and 21 food bank users in eight food banks across the two study sites. Data was thematically analysed and using Stones’ Strong Structuration theory.

Embedded in local systems, food banks can provide food parcels containing two to three days’ worth of food. However, this is dependent upon food availability as food banks acquire food mainly through donations and surplus provisions. Food banks, therefore, have to balance providing food parcels that are ‘sufficient’ in terms of calories, variety, and familiarity whilst also meeting dietary needs and accommodating the household context in which the food will be prepared and consumed. Food bank users are subsequently encouraged to participate in the construction of their food parcel, indicating which food items they are more likely to utilize according to their taste, needs, and resources available. However, this flexibility in food choice is restricted by the internal food bank supply chain and the food practices of the food bank, involuntarily positioning food banks as gatekeepers to users’ dietary practices.

With limited control over choice and stability in the quantity and quality of food acquired, elements of choice and dignity have become part of the food bank service provision as to mitigate the dependency on donations and surplus food.
Community Resilience Building as Mosaic: Everyday Urban Informality in Pantang, Guangzhou

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Abstract

This research explores how everyday urban informality has contributed to the nonlinear community resilience building in Pantang, a renovated historic and aging urban village in Guangzhou of China. Pantang is located in Guangzhou's old town area, with a history of more than a thousand years for recreation and leisure. As a product of industrialization, urbanization, and urban renovation, Pantang has generated multicultural private-public spaces with informality for local residents, small business owners, and tourists, including wholesale markets, dim sum joints, public parks, handshake residential buildings, wet markets, and cultural and creative stores. By such critical hubs, Pantang showcases itself as a neighborhood filled with the contrasts between traditional and modern, natural and built, authentic and inauthentic, inclusive and exclusive, local and global. However, the physical, cultural, and social boundaries of such contrasts are not rigidly divided, but revealed more like mosaics. Through participatory observation and in-depth interviews, this study examines how informality, as the key concept, spatially and socioeconomically connects various forms and qualities of sociality with the contemporary urban transformation in Pantang. In particular, diverse populations demonstrate how they have formed, practiced, and mingled their different but sometimes shared ordinary lived experiences facing precarity. In this way, the neighborhood of Pantang offers new modes of social mobilities and community building among various actors, which further shape the social, cultural, and spatial notion of Pantang. This place-based research in the Chinese context adds insights to the growing scholarship of contemporary urban resilience, in the face of Asia's rapid urban transformation.
“They’re probably quite used to this idea of us and them”: Racialising assemblages in the reproduction of global relations, national cultures and identities in school geography in England.

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Abstract

The school curriculum is a tool of statecraft in the sense that it is a selection of knowledge by those in power (Apple, 1996, Winter, 2011) and a means of influencing the identities of students as citizens (Todd, 2001). Analysis of school texts and interviews with students and teachers in two ‘multicultural’ secondary schools exposed the enactment of the white state narrative underpinning the geography GCSE topic of global development. Racialising discourses produced narratives of hierarchisation with respect to countries and people. Whilst teachers recognised these curriculum deceits, they complied with the technology of state accountability in order to support students to achieve target grades.

Weheliye (2014) describes such discourses as ‘racialising assemblages’ in which ‘race, racialisation, and racial identities are on-going sets of political relations that require, through constant perpetuation ... the barring of non-white subjects from the category of the human as it is performed in the modern west’ (p.3). Racialised hierarchisation is the hallmark of racial capitalism (Robinson, 1983; Bhattacharrya, 2018; Bledsoe & Wright, 2019) in which racialisation constructs non-dominant groups as having less value than dominant groups (Pulido, 2017). This study shows how state-driven geopolitical narratives in school knowledge constitute racialised global relations, national cultures and student identities and protect capitals, whilst hiding all from view.

The conference theme is ‘recovery’. It asks: What does it look like, feel like and entail? Decolonising Geography is a What'sApp community of transformative practitioners, comprising teacher activists, education and geography scholars. It offers a safe space for discussions about race and racialisation, but also pedagogy, curriculum design and education policy. It is a space of learning where collaborative networks imagine and work towards emancipatory futures. https://decolonisegeography.com/ Members critically review examination texts, develop decolonising teaching materials, curate a website promoting rigorous scholarly debates, research and advice, write and present collaboratively in professional and academic journals and conferences.
Ageing in a Neuropolis: Drifting through Late Life, Growing Old in Singapore

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University of British Columbia, Canada

Abstract

Longevity is a wonderful thing yet Singapore is seeing record high suicide rates among seniors. Alongside, Singapore has undergone a sea change in its urban transformation from slum to global city in half a century, witnessed and partaken-in by this generation of seniors now in late life. How did longevity regarded frequently as a blessing become something people feel stuck with in everyday living? Despite material improvements in living standards, wounds, hopes and sedimented stresses enfold into despondence and health-and-wealth concerns as many seniors drift in late life, countering the romanticised notion of ‘successful ageing’ promulgated by the State and driven by bio-political manoeuvres. Drawing from oral histories and fieldwork in Singapore, I trace biographical stories alongside Singapore’s strident march of urban redevelopment to outline the mentalities that underlie the practices of everyday socio-spatial realities of growing old. I build on the idea of the Neuropolis (Fitzgerald, Rose and Singh, 2016), an analytical optic positioned within an urban life-course perspective that foregrounds the body in understanding the ageing experience as embedded in governmentalties combinatorically spatial, biographical and biological. I borrow too from Henri Lefebvre’s notion of rhythmanalysis to articulate how continued uneven power circuitries are cumulative and embodied across time-space, honed by dressage and moments that bubble to resist endemic rhythms of precarity. In doing so, I urge a critical re-imagination in planning for longevity that reappraises approaches towards age-friendly city making and the immediacies of physicalist measures.
The lonely eagles in the Post-feminism time? Becoming the career girls on Chinese video-sharing platforms

June Wang
City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong (China)

Abstract

This study aims to interrogate the changing nature of work in the emerging platform economy, with particular attention to the gender issue. The transformation of a new digital workplace has resulted in a growing army of ‘lonely eagles”, which is particularly evident in the industry of video-sharing platforms. Armature video creators, frequently working alone or in small groups, find online video production and sharing an alternative way of work that escapes the usual exploitation in the traditional Fordist production lines. Aside from a feeling of self-actualisation, creating on platforms is also claimed to be friendly to female workers with flexibility on the temporal-spatial dimensions. The platform economy then, as advocated by post-feminist believers, empower women in their path to becoming career girls, who are now “dis-embedded” from communities where gender roles were fixed.

In this study, we study female prosumers in China’s video-sharing platforms, including Bilibili and Tik Tok. We pay particular attention to two things in their everyday work to build up their career. First, we examine the seeming contradictions between the pattern of working alone by creators and their popularity, which is frequently measured and monitored by the size of their followers, number of clicks, in sum, how extensive they can research to the wider public and build up a fan-community of their own. As such, the idea of networking has been central to all creators, throwing them into constant endeavours to sustain and expand their communities by managing networks transcending the boundaries between creators and users, between different themed communities, and between different platforms. Secondly, while “a global sisterhood of chic, empowered and individualistically minded women who find freedom through” building up their community-based career on platforms (Chen, 2012, 215), these career girls become more venerable to attacks, online and offline, which are themselves always about the “problematic she” (McRobbie, 2009).
Struggle over personhood: creating and contesting ‘governable bodies’ in asylum encounters

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Tampere University, Finland

Abstract

The paper presents first results from a research project that explores embodied encounters between asylum seekers, the migration regime that regulates border crossing and asylum admittance, and the societies that host refugees. Drawing from philosophical anthropology, we approach embodiment as not only the medium of agency but also the locus of our fundamental vulnerability as persons. This, we contend, renders the migrant body an arena for the politicization of asylum migration as ‘struggle over personhood’. In the project, we first analyze portrayals of asylum migrants in a set of key policy documents by the European Union and Finland, to explore how precarious ‘governable bodies’ are created though seemingly neutral policy-making bound by international treaties and European humanitarian principles. As these policies are realized in various administrative practices where asylum seekers encounter the migration regime – ranging from border governance to housing arrangements to asylum interviews to health and education services to integration practices – their impact to the subject formation of asylum migrants is immense. In the present geopolitical condition, we pay particular attention to the portrayals of asylum migrants in regard their countries of origin. The second part of our project will explore ethnographically encounters between asylum seekers and local people in Tampere, Finland, including people involved in the migration regime, humanitarian agencies, as well as local urban residents. This study aims at gaining in-depth understanding about how experiences of (not) being encountered as a person connect with asylum seekers’ capacities to agency.
“Revolution on the rates”: Practising resistance and care against precarity in 1980s Scottish unemployed workers’ centres

Rosie Hampton
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

From 1980 to 1986, the number of unemployed people in Scotland rose from 220,200 to 390,000. Compounded by the Thatcherite erosion of the welfare state, many were suddenly without the traditional connections to material resources and community that had previously been present through employment and trade union activities. The stark lack of alternative infrastructures in the face of multiply sited and exacerbated precarity, as characterised by neoliberalism, posed new challenges for the Scottish Trades Union Congress and local political organisers. Thus, this paper will reflect upon the ways in which unemployed workers’ centres resisted both the everyday and structural implications of precarity, weaving together the complicated geographies of employment, housing, and political organising. It contributes to an emerging literature on unemployed workers’ centres that situates them as an important site through which labour geographers can craft more agentic and nuanced understandings of unemployed resistance (Griffin, 2021). Drawing on archival material and oral history interviews related to unemployed workers’ centres across Glasgow and Edinburgh, I intend to also highlight how users and workers within each centre embedded emotion and care into practices of solidarity throughout each space (Jupp, 2022; Lawson, 2007). Combatting precarity in spaces that themselves at times felt precarious prompted urgent and emotionally charged conversations on what the enduring role of unemployed workers’ centres should be. Each oral history interview therefore represented an important opportunity to collaboratively reflect on how successful they had been in achieving their aims.
The housing ‘trilemma’: geographies of precarity in rural Scotland

Christopher Murray
University of St Andrews, UK

Abstract

A letter published on 7th September 2020, written by community figures and residents of the Scottish Highlands and Islands recently called on the Scottish Government to bring in legislation to prevent new “economic clearances”, in part driven by the surging market for second homes and holiday lets. In it, housing challenges such as affordability, accessibility, and quality, were identified as having a critical role in the future sustainability of remote and rural communities. The average purchase price for residential properties in the Western Isles has increased from £65,189 in 2004 to £123,048 last year (Registers of Scotland 2020). Housing precarity (as defined by Clair et al., 2019) has been studied in relation to a wide range of subjects, including: accessibility (McKee et al., 2017; Ribot and Peluso, 2003), quality (Rodgers et al., 2018) and affordability (Stone 2006), particularly in relation to ‘generation rent’ (Bates et al., 2020, Hoolachan et al., 2017), and seasonal workers in touristic areas (Wortman et al., 2016). Despite this wealth of scholarship, and the increasingly critical situation outlined above, the experience of precarity in the context of Scottish rural housing, and rural housing more generally, has received relatively little attention. This paper will set out some early theoretical and empirical work looking at how precarity is produced, experienced, resisted, and imagined through “materialities and space-times of everyday routines and places” (Harris & Nowicki 2018, p. 387) by individuals and communities in rural Scotland. Giving an overview of planned longitudinal qualitative field work in communities across rural Scotland experiencing acute housing stress. With housing theorised as a vital site in the struggle over social reproduction (Gray ed., 2018).
Debt, Obligated Subjectivity, Endurance

Christopher Harker
University College London, UK

Abstract

In this paper I discuss the ways in which Palestinians living in Ramallah have engaged with the rapid and relatively recent growth of bank debt. Incorporated into a broader set of financial and non-financial relations, experiences of bank debt are heterogeneous and can only be understood in relation to longer-term experiences of living through colonial occupation. Moving beyond reductive accounts of the hyper-precariousness of life in debt, the paper offers the concept of obligated subjectivity to frame more-than-individual modes of being amidst multiple economic, social and political relations. In the Palestinian context, this frame draws attention to the role of diverse family relations in understanding debt’s spacings, and practices of enduring conditions created by settler-colonialism.
Discussant
Sarah Mills
Loughborough University, UK

Abstract
Discussant
Healing Blanket

Jad El Khoury
KHIO, Lebanon

Abstract

As a visual artist and architect, who grew up in Lebanon, there is a sense of urgency in my practice. What’s at stake here is a whole post war generation inheriting the trauma from their parents. War traces can be encountered on almost every wall in Lebanon. Bullet and missile holes, empty buildings loaded with horrific stories.

In my presentation I will share how in my art practice I experiment with healing visual works that could potentially rewire the general public connections in relation to traumatizing memories.

How Accidental monuments of bitterness, in war zones could become generators of hope.

A straightforward example here is Burj El Hawa (Tower of the wind) Beirut, 2018. Where I managed to transform a 40 stories abandoned building, which was used as a sniper base during the civil war and a torture prison, into 10 days choreographed installation dancing with wind. I will talk about why the works should be temporary installations leaving no trace, and how my practice evolved into healing different subjects, after moving to Oslo in 2020 for my Master studies in Art and public space.
Polluted Leisure and Love in Shadow Places

clinton evers
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

Violence. Violence everywhere. Dead crabs by the many thousands on the beach. Dead fish too. Sick dogs and concerned owners. Ponds full of tires. Bubbles surfacing from broken gas pipes somewhere ‘down there’ at the bottom of the river. The wind sweeping through the wreckage of an abandoned steelworks providing an incessant hum echoing across this blue space ‘wasteland’. Someone fishing sits huddled on a concrete jetty. A surfer, shivering, hurriedly pulls and tugs on a neoprene wetsuit as they dance on the snow. A beachcomber hunts for washed up plastics to turn into art. No-one is supposed to be here. It’s not only pollution (both physical and cultural) to worry about. Government Covid-19 restriction demand everyone stay home. There’s a pandemic. Yet, it’s widely known that encounters with nature – this post-industrial wasteland is nature too – can make you feel better emotionally, psychologically, physically. So, people disobey government regulations. Leisure is at times a mode of loving. Here I am reading love as wellbeing, repair, care, regeneration, survival, and recovery. Drawing on community-based storytelling and creative methodologies to understand a case study of post-industrial ‘shadow places’ (Plumwood, 2008) in north-east England, this presentation examines how through ‘polluted leisure’ and ‘resigned activism’ people tactically practice love for place, community, and self. I argue that this love does not occur in spite of the violence of capital, pollution, extraction, socio-cultural marginalisation, and ecological damage but an honesty about being intimately entangled with such.

References


The right to food as a vector to merge diverse struggles

Tanya Zerbian, Mags Adams
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Abstract

Climate, conflict and ongoing crises like the Covid-19 pandemic increasingly endanger ensuring the right to food worldwide as food supply chain disruptions resulting from these dynamics affect food accessibility and availability. In this context, there is a resurgence of debates of how to organise food differently. Calls for restructuring the food system are permeated by diverse discourses, including, among others, agroecology, food democracy, food resilience, and food sovereignty, which are usually enacted in and advocated by alternative and local food initiatives. Nevertheless, there is increased scepticism about their capacity to achieve the right to food, thus calling for the collectivisation of strategies. Yet, alternative and local food initiatives are still disconnected from each other and, more importantly, have yet to reach a common discourse about the main pathways for social change.

This paper critically analyses the main discourses advanced by alternative and local food initiatives found in the literature and uses two case studies (Preston, UK, and Vitoria-Gasteizn, Spain) to demonstrate that a main barrier to achieve a broader food movement relates to different, and sometimes juxtaposed, conceptualisations of food questions – an epistemic rift. In doing so, it highlights that, while alternative and local food initiatives intersect in their aim to introduce food citizenship as a vector for change, a new, more inclusive, discourse needs to permeate these spaces to drive meaningful change. Through this critical engagement, the paper argues that the right to food could be used as an entry point for this, albeit with a primary focus on people’s everyday experiences of injustices across the food supply chain (beyond material relations) and a territorial dimensión.
Industrial Landscape of Pulp and Paper - with local attachment and natural landscape

Masaaki Okada
Kindai University, Japan

Abstract

Industrial cities possess unique industrial landscape (technoscape) all over the world. Recently in Japan, people discovered new role of industrial landscape as tourists’ attractions, and different kinds of tour programs, such as factory tours or night technoscape watching, have been held by local government or chambers of commerce. It is not only the futuristic “cool” landscape, but also significant cultural landscape which reflects natural, or human geographic conditions, sometimes with intense local attachment.

Paper production and consumption has been called “the barometer of cultural matureness”, and their history obviously overlaps with the one of Japan’s economy and culture. History of paper production in Japan starts with handmade “Washi” in 7th century with animism taking paper as “god” in several regions till today. It has kept evolving through the time of industrial revolution in Meiji period and high economic growth after WWII. Modern pulp and paper industry forms unique industrial landscapes in each inland or coastal cities.

This research surveys properties of industrial landscape formed by paper manufacturing works, transportation of materials and products, water supply facilities, or hydraulic power stations, that are all peculiar to pulp and paper industry. In addition, we attempt to manifest local cultures or folklores generated by each cities’ natural and social backgrounds, which realized development of pulp and paper industries.
Flour to the People

Andrew Whitley
Bread Matters, UK

Abstract

Loaves disappeared first. Then flour. Empty shelves were a stark motif of the Covid-19 crisis. Overnight, lockdown caused a quadrupling of demand for local flour. Like other specialist mills and food businesses, Scotland The Bread was overwhelmed and had to close its online shop for a fortnight to catch up.

Flour to the People was (and is) an ingenious response to the food insecurity that afflicts many vulnerable people when just-in-time supply chains are disrupted or prices spike. It meets an immediate demand for a dietary staple and offers a blueprint for a more resilient food system involving short distances and renewed relationships of trust between producers and citizens. Local food networks offer solutions to pressing societal problems of diet-related ill-health, meaningful employment and quality of life as well as addressing biodiversity loss and climate-heating emissions.

Scotland The Bread researches the relationship between diversity and health at multiple trophic levels. Monocultures of high-input commodity wheat, using high-yielding, genetically homogeneous but nutritionally indifferent varieties carpet a near-sterile landscape and don’t end up in local loaves at all. People need better bread.

Our collaborative action research is developing nutrient-dense locally-adapted modern wheat and rye landraces as well as a new way of valuing farm output for the number of people, species and good jobs ‘nourished per hectare’. It’s a concept ready to nurture a self-confident, decentralised, healthy, resilient and low-impact flour and bread economy for good and all.
Meeting the Right to Food in the Absence of State Support: US COVID Context

Molly Anderson
Middlebury College, USA

Abstract

The United States (US) has failed to formally recognize healthy food as a human right, even though it has created many federal programs to supplement food access for low-income people. These programs were augmented during increased food insecurity caused by COVID. In addition to support from federal and sub-national programs, community-based organizations rose to the challenge of ensuring that people had adequate food through mutual aid organizations and volunteer efforts. But did these efforts in fact ensure the right to food? Are community-based organizations a better means of meeting the right to food than state programs, as some have argued, given their knowledge of local conditions and potentials? What would have been different during COVID had federal and sub-national programs operated from a right to food rather than a charitable basis? How might US agroecological farmers have been supported better in their efforts to provide food in dignified ways to people who lacked access?

This presentation will explore the potential and limits of voluntary and community-based efforts and how grounding in the right to food makes a difference. It will draw from case studies of the right to food movement in the US and its aims, to highlight successes and limitations.
Spectacular Childhood and Speculative Futures in N.K. Jemison’s Broken Earth Trilogy

Robin Wright
Boston College, USA

Abstract

Speculative fiction has proved a fertile ground for unearthing how to make sense of and make change in the Anthropocene, but scholars have rarely paid enough attention to the treatment of social reproduction in speculative narratives of the Anthropocene. This presentation incorporates Cindi Katz’s (2008) work on childhood to explore N.K. Jemison’s Broken Earth trilogy (2015-2017), which I examine as a stark accounting of how the spectacular figuration of childhood is central to the maintenance of an oppressive geologic and political order. Broken Earth takes place in The Stillness, a continent marked by moments of devastating seismic activity. Within The Stillness, some people (Orogenes) have the ability to channel geologic forces, but for these talents Orogenes are fiercely reviled and controlled. The education system enslaves Orogene children, treating them as commodities (whose talent can be extracted) and as waste (when their abilities cannot be contained). At the start of the books, The Stillness is rent by an earthquake unlike any other, precipitating a continental struggle to transform what people know about Orogenes, what Orogenes know about the Earth, and how Orogenes and non-Orogenes alike can come into a more right relationship with the Earth itself. Jemison offers a world where changes in social reproduction are ineluctably intertwined with changes in human (and more-than-human) relationships with the environment. I suggest that geographic scholarship on childhood and social reproduction offers a critical tool of analysis for those seeking to better understand the speculative narratives and speculative geographies of the Anthropocene.
**Making Place, Mobilising Place: Achieving Greater Manchester’s Decarbonisation Ambitions**

Ami Crowther, Saska Petrova, Kate Scott, James Evans  
University of Manchester, UK

**Abstract**

Increasingly, cities and city regions are outlining ambitions to undertake decarbonisation actions and achieve carbon neutrality ahead of national government targets. Cities are positioned as critical sites for supporting decarbonisation processes, as they are considered to be a scale where decisions can be made and implemented to evoke change. Greater Manchester has outlined ambitions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2038, with the articulation of these low-carbon ambitions drawing upon both the absolute and the imagined space of the city region. Incorporated into Greater Manchester’s low-carbon vision are understandings of the physical space in which the low-carbon transition will occur, as well as narratives reflecting the historical legacy of the Industrial Revolution and the cultural identity of the region. Greater Manchester’s low-carbon vision can be considered a sociotechnical imaginary as a shared agenda of change is established with future objectives and how to achieve them outlined.

The urgency of addressing the climate crisis has highlighted the need to shift from strategically planning for decarbonisation to actually implementing the plans developed. This research considers how place is mobilised to support decarbonisation and the scales at which plans are translated into action. Assemblage thinking is drawn upon as an analytical tool to help unpack the multiple scales and relationships associated with the development and enactment of Greater Manchester’s decarbonisation ambitions. Insights are obtained through a document review and 34 semi-structured interviews with stakeholders associated with Greater Manchester’s decarbonisation ambitions. Within the analysis, the action undertaken at two different sub city-region scales is discussed - Local Authorities and Innovation Projects - with the nature of cross-scalar relationships discussed. The analysis highlights how decarbonisation is contingent on the interaction between multiple scales, including city regions, local authorities, individuals and national, as well as the value of having the overarching city region framing.
Recovering the Climate, Reinventing the Human.

Shirley Howe
The Irish Climate Analysis and Research UnitS (ICARUS), Maynooth University, Republic of Ireland

Abstract

If the exigencies of human societies (culture) are understood as separated from or even oppositional to those of the not- or other than- human (nature) in Western perspectives of and responses to anthropogenic climate change, what does this mean for climate and environmental recovery? Developing a transdisciplinary approach across geography and anthropology, this paper draws on periods of ethnographic fieldwork on a remote island, Inishbofin, located eight miles off Ireland’s Atlantic Coast at County Galway. It examines how climate change perspectives and adaptation responses may be habituated by this island population of 173 people, where the influence of weather informs each action and non-action. It then proposes that the prevalent idea of climate, conceptualised as long-term patterns of weather at a given time and place, must itself be recovered, so that climate becomes reinterpreted as patterns of both weather and culture. This interpretation of climate is one that can enable local knowledge, experience, and cultural ways of being to be incorporated into effective national climate and biodiversity recovery policies as an immediate imperative. Secondly, this paper proposes that resilient and enduring recovery will be ultimately dependent on a profound shifting of the conception of human societies to being a part of rather than apart from nature, including weather and climate, to argue that to move beyond recovery, reinvention is necessary.
From recovery to resilience, are collaborative approaches the solution?

Joshua Rees, Lopa Saxena, Jana Fried
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

The impact of Covid-19 has exacerbated existing food insecurity concerns within the UK and brought the issue further into the limelight. At the same time, it has thrown light on the critical role that collaborations and partnerships can play in times of crises. Unsurprisingly, the primary response has revolved around meeting urgent and short-term food needs (e.g., redistributing food surplus in food banks, social supermarkets, and community food hubs). However, these responses' immediate and short-term nature, reliance on external support and funding, dependence on volunteers, limited availability of nutritional, culturally appropriate food, and the social stigma often associated with food aid have been critiqued. There is an increasing focus on collaborations and partnerships that support sustainable and equitable approaches to food security – they include food networks, alliances and coalitions, food policy councils, and cross-sectoral partnerships.

In my presentation, I will share some findings from my ongoing doctoral research, which critically examines the role of collaborations and partnerships in building a food secure future. I will draw on a few examples of such collaborations in the UK context. Who are the actors involved? What enabled them to be formed? What challenges do they face? How inclusive are they? Is access to (and involvement in) collaborative approaches shared equally across people/communities? Through my presentation, I hope to generate a discussion around the potential & limitations of collaboration to build community food resilience. This presentation will be relevant to practitioners addressing food insecurity and those researching food security, food systems, and community-led approaches.
The Making of Everyday Segregation and (Un)happiness at Third Places

Yingling Fan, Xiaohuan Zeng, Ying Song
University of Minnesota, USA

Abstract

Segregation is a fundamental characteristic of American cities. Increasing research has shown that the segregation experiences in American cities extend beyond residential neighborhoods into third places—everyday activity places outside the home and workplace. Using a multi-day smartphone survey that captures both people’s activity locations and emotional experiences throughout the day, we present the first study to date that connects segregation experiences at third places to people’s emotional well-being at these locations. We find that non-Hispanic whites are disproportionately exposed to whiteness and wealth at their “third places”. Further, everyday exposure to whiteness has a significant and positive effect on the emotional well-being and happiness levels among non-Hispanic whites, but not among persons of color. Likewise, everyday exposure to wealth has a significant and positive effect on the emotional well-being and happiness levels among high-income people, but not among low-income people. The results provide strong evidence that racial segregation at “third places” disproportionately offers well-being benefits to non-Hispanic whites, and that income segregation disproportionately benefits those who are high-income. The evidence establishes everyday segregation at third places as a social determinant of health that contributes to the persistent health disparities in American cities.
Dromoeлимination: accelerating settler colonialism in Palestine

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the paces of settler colonial elimination in the occupied West Bank. In particular, it looks at how non-state colonial actors, represented by the settler NGO Regavim, engender an entrepreneurial force that constantly develops new techniques and models that challenge the slow and creeping eliminatory pace of state’s administrative, legal and security bodies with an accelerating eliminatory speed – what we call ‘dromoeлимination’. By closely elaborating the ongoing events in the West Bank village of Susiya, this presentation shows how these state-settler dynamics traverse beyond the eliminatory functions of the state while at the same time fundamentally reconfiguring them. We end by discussing how Palestinian struggle against such intensified temporalities of elimination, and the forms of dispossession and destruction they contain, become centered around ‘depleted time’.
Building food security through nutrition gardening and (female) rural community leadership

Menusha Gunasekara
Independent/Freelance M&E practitioner, Sri Lanka

Abstract

This study explores findings from a qualitative case study concerning how female Child Development Officers in tea plantations in rural up-country Sri Lanka collaborate with communities to drive nutrition gardening to minimize food insecurity which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study involved qualitative semi-structured interviews, conducted over eight months, of female Child Development Officers (CDO), community women, and volunteers based in Nuwara Eliya and Matale tea estates on their engagement with nutrition gardening and related activities with an NGO. With the NGO project on WASH and Nutrition, CDOs-female and mostly from minority up-country Tamil ethnic group and low-income backgrounds work in tea estate managed Child Development Centres (CDC)-are working to address food insecurity within their community. This study seeks to understand how they have been successful in promoting nutrition gardening and related activities as a community agent and how to strengthen their role as a sustainable localized voice to monitor community food security. The study participants shared major challenges in achieving community-driven food security through nutrition gardening and used various strategies to navigate them. The study suggests that CDO led nutrition gardening is a successful strategy to address post-pandemic food security and nutrition threats in the rural estate context.
The Eat Well Age Well Project’s journey to influencing food and health policy.

Tilly Robinson-Miles
Eat Well Age Well, UK

Abstract

Our ability to eat well, age well and live well is influenced by a multitude of factors, which have been and continue to be exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, (Carruthers et al, 2020). Scotland’s population is ageing, but at a national level there has been increasing commitment to create a Scotland that is the “best place in the world to grow old in” (Scottish Government, 2021). At least 1 in 10 older people in Scotland are at risk of or suffering from malnutrition as undernutrition, (Eat Well Age Well, 2022). Scottish National Charity Food Train have been campaigning towards recognition of the linkages between health and wellbeing and food policy (Eat Well Age Well, 2022). Working collaboratively across Scotland, anecdotally and through partnership work and academic research Food Train evidence the importance of a preventative approach to health and wellbeing, that recognises the role of food and its importance in supporting individuals to thrive as they age, must be recognised across all areas of national policy. This session will discuss Food Train’s 26 years of learning including its Covid-19 response and demonstrate the importance of creating strong cross sectoral and interconnected health and food policy to tackle issues including food insecurity, malnutrition, loneliness and social isolation. The need to move beyond siloed thinking is relevant to any policy work at any scale and is vital to protect, transform and create a Scotland where everyone “takes pride and pleasure” from their food experience (Scottish Government, 2022).
Coronavirus’ exposure of food, place, and community resilience: a Welsh local authority perspective

Eifiona Thomas Lane, Rebecca Jones, Luke Prosser
Bangor University, UK

Abstract

Coronavirus has accentuated the cracks within the fragile UK food system. Empty shelves and empty stomachs, the damaging consequences of coronavirus have led to an unprecedented increase in food insecurity and food access.

This paper draws on the multiple perspectives of those working to combat food insecurity, inequality, and inaccessibility in Gwynedd; exploring the responses of the pandemic from food banks and charities, innovative food distribution collaborations and the role of maintaining already fragile rural communities.

This paper concludes that the need for transformative place making to build stronger, more resilient communities has never been more pressing with support from public sector funding to help alleviate some of the hardship and pressure with the rise in poverty and austerity, coronavirus imposed or not. The paper discusses the impacts exposed by the pandemic and lessons which can be drawn and reflected on for future benefit.
Neither One State nor Two: What does Israel stand to gain from a partial annexation of the West Bank?

Merav Amir
Queen’s University Belfast, UK

Abstract

In 2020 Benyamin Netanyahu declared that he would go where no Israeli prime minister has gone before, when he revealed his plans to annex significant portions of West Bank territory. While the Jewish-Israeli nationalistic right has made no secret of its long-held aspiration to annex the West Bank, Netanyahu’s declaration has nevertheless caught many of Israel’s analysts by surprise. The broad agreement among experts has been that such an annexation is simply inoperable. Indeed, several obstacles have been identified, each sufficiently substantive to prevent Israel from carrying out an annexation of the West Bank, leading many to predict that Israel would avoid, perhaps indefinitely, carrying out such an annexation. While full annexation of the West Bank by Israel has been debated at length, an annexation that ranges only over parts of West Bank territory has received little attention thus far. Yet, partial annexation does not only diverge from a full one territorially; it merits consideration on its own terms. This paper first argues that it would be erroneous to see partial annexation as merely an intermediate step on Israel’s path to fully applying formal sovereignty on the West Bank. It then maps the pull and push factors that sub tend Israel’s progressing towards partial annexation, exposing the structural ambivalence of Israel’s settler colonial formations towards annexation of West Bank territory. Partial annexation, it claims, strives to mitigate the contradictions between Israel’s settler colonial formations and its constitution as a national project for self-determination, and is geared to set Israel, and it alone, on a decolonized trajectory.
Reconceptualising indigenous territoriality through the lens of multi-locality and multi-activity: A comparative indigenous youth perspective from Bolivia

Philipp Horn\textsuperscript{1}, Olivia Casagrande\textsuperscript{1}, Carlos Revilla\textsuperscript{2}, Katherine Illanes\textsuperscript{2}, Windsor Torrico\textsuperscript{3}
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Abstract

Throughout the last decades much attention has been paid towards urban indigeneity, a phenomenon that existed throughout pre-colonial and colonial times, and represents a present and future trend with more than half of Latin America’s indigenous population likely to reside in cities by 2030. Studies on urban indigeneity paid attention to rural-to-urban migration patterns, processes of urban collective organisation, and efforts to incorporate indigenous rights to the city. Yet, much of this scholarship also reproduces bounded, spatially fixed and linear perspectives, focusing on the city as the central unit of analysis, or portraying movements from the countryside to the city as unidirectional according with dichotomous visions that separate countryside and city.

In this paper we depart from, both, ruralist and city-centric perspectives. We pay attention to continuous rural-urban territorial interconnections which we conceptualise through the notion of multi-local and multi-active lives. We define multi-locality as concomitant residence in rural and urban locations within and beyond a specific national territory and multi-activity as the engagement in diverse socio-economic, political, and cultural practices in distinct territories. Drawing on comparative research in Bolivia, we explore how four different groups of indigenous youths engage in continuous territorial movements that cross the rural-urban divide. Our findings contribute to debates that challenge “fixed” and “delimited” representations of indigenous peoples and their territories, as is evident for example in population censuses. Instead, we call for a conceptualisation of indigenous territoriality without boundaries, in constant flux, and spanning multiple physical, political, socio-cultural and environmental life-worlds within Abya Yala.
Caribbean Cuisine: Palm Trees and Paradise

Charlene Rose
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

One theme my current PhD research has found so far is the use of the palm tree on the signage of Caribbean takeaways and restaurants. It varies in size, colour and position but it makes a recurring appearance. This paper addresses what it could mean in relation to the Caribbean, and more importantly a superdiverse audience in the UK, specifically the Ladywood voting constituency of Birmingham, a superdiverse area.

Whilst there has been some research and literature on Caribbean cuisine in the Geographical research realm, there has been very little on Caribbean restaurants and takeaways especially. The thesis this paper forms a part of, explores the idea that Caribbean cuisine is often viewed as unsuccessful or unpopular when compared to other cuisines that have migrated to the UK, such as Chinese and Indian. However, is this the case when in the Ladywood constituency of Birmingham, a superdiverse inner city voting area, Caribbean takeaways and restaurants are prominent. Raising the question of whether researchers and critics are looking in, or avoiding due to reputation, the right places for them.

The thesis will also examine how these venues advertise to a superdiverse community through their signage, using multimodal discourse analysis, which is often used in the field of Linguistics. It will address how the text, symbols and signs used throughout the signage alongside how they are positioned communicate to a superdiverse community. The spread of Caribbean culture has been studied in relation to music, literature and language but not restaurant and takeaway signage.
Contested Territories and Infrastructure-led Development: Genetic Comparisons as research method

Juan Miguel Kanai
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

The provision of large-scale infrastructure networks has become a central axis of territorial restructuring in Latin America and throughout the global South. This paper introduces the notion of infrastructure-led development as a theoretical framework to understand these shifts and the discontents that they produce, with a methodological emphasis on linking the designs and rationales produced by institutions of global governance and the effects of projects on the ground. I will propose genetic comparisons, a form of relational comparison, as a methodological strategy to comparatively understand variegated investments in roadways, railways, port facilities and various other logistics infrastructures in terms of their common origins within a global regime of infrastructure-led development. Genetic comparisons help identify a global connectivity genome, a design to support strategic integration to transnational value chains, which shapes certain outcomes and inhibits other developments. The presentation concludes with an argument on how (un)realized connectivity produces multiple forms of peri-urban precarity and may thus spearhead territorial contestation.
Strategic essentialisms and peace building: An approach to the perspective of indigenous leaders from Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Carlos Andrés Tobar Tovar
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia

Abstract

In this presentation I will explain the question of the place of strategic essentialisms in the configuration of consensus for the inclusion of indigenous communities in the scope of recognition provided by the State. In this sense, the possibilities and limitations of strategies that consider indigenous identity as a recognizable feature of political dialogue are discussed. Through this perspective, the strategies oriented to give voice to the subaltern are approached, attending to the premise of an epistemological change in the notion of the western political subject, which participates in social conflicts to formulate expressive experiences and appropriation of languages to diagnose the injustices of the present, promoting actions oriented to social change. I will take advantage of this meeting to present the book "Conflicto, memoria y justicia, Repensando las vías hacia la paz en Colombia" (Conflict, memory and justice, rethinking the paths towards peace in Colombia), an editorial project derived from a research in which works close to the one that will be presented are proposed.
'Living Comfortably Without Anybody’s Help’ – (Re)turning to Individual Self-Sufficiency Within China’s Urban Expansion

Hanxi Wang
University of Oxford, UK

Abstract

‘Ziji dongshou, fengyi zushi (Work with your own hands, live comfortably without anybody’s help)’ was Mao Zedong’s message to the Chinese people during the food shortages of the Sino-Japanese war. Since then, this message of self-sufficiency, of encouraging people to ‘do their part’ and lessen the burden upon the state during times of difficulty, has taken root within the national psyche especially as China shifts towards an increasingly neoliberal form of governance. Facing an increasing array of unpredictable issues such as price fluctuations caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the loss of farmland for urban expansion, or the health risks associated with pesticides and industrial pollution, self-sufficiency has re-emerged as a tactic of informal resistance within everyday life to insulate one’s family against fluctuations caused by issues beyond one’s control. Chengshi kaihuang (urban homesteading) is one such informal tactic of self-reliance, where citizens illegally infiltrate what they recognize as “wastelands” within cities, from vacant construction sites to neglected landscaping, to grow vegetables for their family. Urban homesteaders do not frame their cultivation of wasteland as practices for sustenance but rather as a right to food and a right to the city earned through the exercise of values strategically aligned with revolutionary history and imaginaries of Chinese identity. Whilst this contribution critiques urban homesteading as a burdening of individuals due to the failures of the state, it also proposes an examination of how the grassroots agency and new forms of common-ing that urban homesteading creates may contribute to future approaches to urban food insecurity.
EcoSol-agroecology as a counter-hegemonic agenda in Latin America

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Abstract

The hegemonic model of agricultural modernisation combines capital-intensive techno-diffusionist agri-innovation, globalised supply chains (especially for animal feed and processed food) and resource plunder. Causing multiple harms for several decades, this model has been contentious, provoking mass opposition. Throughout Latin America a widespread alternative has been a convergence between social movements for agroecology and for a solidarity economy (henceforth EcoSol-agroecology for short). EcoSol networks develop democratic self-management and mutual aid relationships, within and across initiatives. They develop short food-supply chains (circuitos cortos), whereby agroecological producers avoid profit-driven intermediaries; they build closer relationships with consumers through new socio-cultural identities, providing a fair price for both. These solidaristic markets have been created through cooperative efforts by small-scale producers, civil society groups and local authorities. They provide alternatives to the hegemonic models of techno-diffusionist agric-innovation and market competition, thus potentially playing a counter-hegemonic role. This role depends on building territorial networks and identities, which link otherwise disparate local initiatives into a stronger political-economic force.

From early 2020 onwards, the Covid-19 pandemic turned into a sanitary crisis, imposing extra hygiene requirements, which aggravated the previous difficulties of EcoSol-agroecology from hostile governments. Nevertheless some EcoSol-agroecology initiatives found means to adapt their circuitos cortos, creating extra opportunities for solidaristic bonds. Creative adaptations made the initiatives more visible, built consumer trust, expanded food sales and contributed to donations, framed as solidarity rather than charity. These adaptations can be understood theoretically as common aims activating various kinds of social proximity (organizational, institutional, cultural and spatial), as means to promote solidarity relationships and to counter threats. The networks develop collective capacities for establishing such proximities. These This analytical framework helps to compare diverse local cases (e.g. in Brazil and Bolivia here) as regards their territorial strategies and thus strengthen overall counter-hegemonic strategies of the EcoSol-agroecology agenda.
Honoring Pasts, Escaping Presents, and Dwelling in Futures: The Palestine Land Society Village Reconstruction Competition

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Abstract

Nostalgia and imagining the future are often seen as dichotomously opposed temporalities and spaces. However, with indigenous struggle, engaging in critical acts of remembering becomes an inextricable part of both imagining a future and working to realize it. In this paper, I provide a snapshot from a larger three-case comparative study of countermapping in Algeria, Hawaii, and Palestine. Zooming in on the Palestinian case, I discover how countermapping by documentation and design can become a decolonial praxis for those who engage in it. Examining specifically Visualizing Palestine’s Open Maps project and the Palestine Land Society’s Village Reconstruction competition, I use what Denis Cosgrove (2008) calls the two directions of study in critical cartography – the finished map and mapping process – to ask how these initiatives straddle objectives of historic preservation and imagining entirely new futures. Blending visual analysis with ethnographic interviews with the Open Maps team and winners of the last three years of the reconstruction design competition, I seek to highlight these individuals’ technical and political considerations of documenting, archiving, and remapping. I seek to answer: How does affirming a particular past spatial presence also challenge the idea of settler permanence? What is reclaimed by including Palestinians across the world in the digitizing process via public mapathon events? In redesigning a destroyed village from scratch, how do the students understand the priorities of such a potential scenario?
Beyond neoliberal niches: disaster recovery through biodiversity

Jacob Free
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Abstract

Humberto Maturana's concept of the organism-niche unity is useful for understanding the new affective atmospheres that open up during traumatic disasters and how recovery from these traumas can become a path to food sovereignty. The organism-niche unity is the definition of autopoietic – i.e. Self-creating/maintaining – beings through their ecological niche, with both the organism and the niche being defined by their contact with each other; in other words, organisms are defined by what niche they occupy to the point where it does not make sense to theorize them separately. Human niches are caught up in how we navigate socioeconomic environments which are defined by larger power structures such as neoliberal capitalism; such systems become ecologically destructive when the number of niches – and thus organisms – they allow to exist are below the amount required to sustain life. During disasters, the human structures that define these environments and what niches are possible within them are disrupted or even halted completely. This disruption has the potential to allow new niches to emerge, such as in Christchurch in 2010 after the earthquake with the reclamation of public space by the community. Food sovereignty can be theorized as having the ability to define your own organism-niche unity in the absence of imposed socioeconomic structures that are ecologically limiting. In this way, recovery from disasters can take the form of taking control of what ecological niches we occupy and how we define our culture through them.
Decolonising alternatives to development: the case of Permaculture in Australia

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Abstract

In the context of the current civilizational crisis (Escobar, 2015), the existing alternatives to development (Gudynas, 2016) are showing a wide range of possible paths to transform hegemonic development practices and the ways we relate to places. Permaculture, first named in Australia in the ’70s and now present as a practice and a movement in many countries across the world (Ferguson & Lovell, 2015), is one such example. The permaculture system involves the planning and design of land and communities following a relational ontology, which has shown to be of a great significance to plan transitions to more sustainable futures (Ferguson & Lovell, 2014) and increased resilience to the effects of natural disasters (Centemeri, Topçu, & Burgess, 2021). However, there are some questions about this practice and its narratives that remain unclear. Some of these questions are related to the acknowledgement of Indigenous Knowledge in which the systems are based, the identities and diversity of its participants and adherents around the world, the gender inequalities inside the movement, and the effects of colonial heritage. This paper draws upon decolonization theories, rural sociology, political ecology and gender studies to undertake a critical analysis to reveal the continuities of our colonial past that persist within the permaculture movement. The aim of highlighting these issues is to demonstrate the importance of recognising and treating the residues of coloniality in order to achieve the fair and just transitions to which the movement aspires.
“Of remains and aspirations in subaltern spaces in apparent crisis: stories of a small town living on external waste in the Indian countryside”

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Abstract

Through the example of a small town in India, this paper looks at the emergence of discard economies in subaltern spaces, often overlooked, far from metropolitan centers. Geographically remote in the countryside, economically devastated by the liberal reforms of the 1990s, socially marginalized and politically discriminated against by the Hindutva ideology, the population of this small town (Muslim, uneducated, poor) was left without no other hope than migrating to bigger cities in hope of a better life. But due to several factors that the analysis will demonstrate, local entrepreneurs in Bhojpur saw an economic opportunity in some of the flows of waste abandoned by the capitalist system. By managing to capture some of these flows and by reintegrating them into the regional economy, these local pioneers were able to move beyond an inherent crisis to generate a proper and stable income, which was spatially translated into the development of the overall town. Thus, since the end of the 1990s, the local town economy has been reorganised around five recycling chains of (1) used batteries; (2) electronic waste; (3) defective solar panels; (4) plastic waste (5) rags. The biographic analysis of each of these sectors allows us to highlight characteristic configurations that transform the territories where material flows take place, not without political controversies linked to the associated pollution and potential sanitary crisis (for battery lead especially), but also with inventiveness, flexibility and emulation in the recovery of the remains rejected by the dominant system. By considering these marginal and marginalized sites such as this small town and its inhabitants, the present (on-going) research work proposes to put these peripheries back at the center of the analysis in order to apprehend the unprecedented geography that it translates and the local aspirations that make it possible, beyond the apparent crisis that preveals at first sight.
Veblen and Polanyi for Radical Care: Can the Crisis 'Covid-19 Pandemic' Truly Act as a Trigger for the Self-Organisation of a New Resilient System of Food in the Republic of Korea?

Mu-Jeong Kho
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Abstract

In the current socioeconomic inequality deepening in capitalism, we are now facing challenging times: the Covid-19 pandemic and an economic crisis. Major ‘adaptations’ (as 'self-organising changes') are necessary. The fundamental challenge must be institutional: the established institutions are improper, and a greater and long-term period for experimentation is necessary. This is why we should look at the basics of institutional economics, particularly in radical traditions such as Thorstein Veblen and Karl Polanyi, out of the ruling neoliberal-consensus. The literature, however, has weakly addressed the issue: whether can a crisis such as the Covid-19 Pandemic truly act as a ‘trigger’ for the self-organisation of a new resilient system of food (and if not, how). This paper, which defines self-organisation as ‘institutional process of recovery’ through reorganising order-out-of-disorder, seeks to answer the question with the institutional matrix of self-organisation (market versus non-market; on the other hand, pro-capital versus anti-capital) through a deeper understanding of institutional economics in radical traditions such as Veblen and Polanyi, and applies it to an empirical case-study (with quantitative data-analysis) on the Republic of Korea during the last two-decades (to the current period of Covid-19 Pandemic). By doing so, this paper argues: beyond superficial logics of recovery such as market versus state on the issue ‘self- organisation,’ institutional economics in radical traditions addresses the deeper issue of structuration in Korea’s capitalistic systems of food, which act as the roots and substances of the country’s longstanding food crisis. The crisis 'Covid-19 Pandemic' in turn can truly act as a trigger for self-organisation, but only valid when it is connected to the ‘radical care’ looking for a new resilient system of food, beyond the capitalistic system. This connection of institutional economics to radical theory, particularly of Veblen and Polanyi, also serves as one of the preconditions to deepening Marx.
Sirens, sound and science: fog signalling in Scotland, 1860 - 1900

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Abstract

In the late nineteenth century, a network of sound-based signals was constructed around Scotland’s dangerous but heavily travelled coasts in an attempt to facilitate safe navigation during fog. While much has been said about the development of lighthouses in this period, little attention has been paid to these sound-based aids to navigation. Drawing on the archive of D. & T. Stevenson, engineers to the Northern Lighthouse Board, in combination with the work of contemporary scientists and engineers, this paper explores the processes by which fog horns, sirens, bells, and guns were developed, theorised, tested, and implemented in Scotland.

A wide range of debates over the nature and status of sound were vital to this process: Could sound be reliably made to travel far enough to warn sailors of danger? What kinds of sounds should be used for signalling? How should signalling account for differences in hearing experience or capacity between individuals? What weight should be given to issues of noise disruption, cost, reliability, or precision when designing the fog signal network?

In examining how these questions shaped the implementation of fog sirens and other sound-based signalling devices in nineteenth century Scotland, this paper introduces the senses into the historical geographies of engineering and demonstrates the possibilities of a multisensory approach to understanding technological development.
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**Atmospheric care and situated subjects in the academy**

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**Abstract**

How can teaching, mentoring and supporting student emotions through tumultuous and unsettling times create spaces of care within the academy? These spaces of care challenge and rework entrenched ideas that understand teaching as rational exchange structured to ignore the situated struggles of all those that inhabit the academy. In this paper, I reflect upon my intention, practice and often (in)ability to nurture spaces of care particularly during times of crisis. I will draw from two contexts - my experiences as a young, brown, international teaching assistant just after 9/11 in the US, and those in the past couple of years (teaching, administration, mentoring) that have been particularly unsettling for students in India (with anti-CAA protests and subsequent violent suppression of student gatherings, farmers protests in Punjab, and the pandemic). Lines of professional, personal and political were evidently blurred even when the institutional context insisted on reiterating hierarchies, boundaries and disembodied, objective engagement with students. Reflecting on classroom (and beyond) situations that worked and did not work, I will argue for critical care, compassion and creativity to be central to pedagogy at all levels. These cannot be fragmented and need to include our engagement with materials, ecology, students, staff, each other and ourselves. Care needs to be atmospheric and embodied at the same time: So that we breathe it in and out and feel it in all our interactions.
Critically Compassionate Higher Education Curriculum

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Abstract

Higher education curriculum design - learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessment and feedback methods - is primarily guided by simplified modern management principles of structured and objective auditing and monitoring. These modern management principles are designed to assess the cognitive domain of learning in the increasingly commodified culture of higher education. A critically compassionate curriculum aims to transform the commodified culture of higher education, with its increased anxiety and stress due to reduced graduate employment prospects, the COVID-19 pandemic, financial hardships, and ecological griefs arising from climate emergencies. This presentation will discuss pedagogy and the practice of co-designing a critically compassionate curriculum to counter the commodified higher education culture of individualism, competition, and hierarchy that has increasingly replaced the cultures of solidarity, care, collaboration, diversity, equity, and inclusion. This paper argues that a critically compassionate curriculum should integrate critical pedagogy and humanist pedagogy in designing learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessment and feedback methods. Participants will gain insights on three aspects of a critically compassionate curriculum – collegial relations between students and educators, compassion for students' lived experience, and collective visioning for the future of higher education.
Race and the geographies of educational spaces: Engaging with students’ lived experiences as an act of care and to co-create more just tomorrows

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Abstract

Education is both embodied and affective. Those who work and study in educational institutions not only shape, and are shaped, by curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, but also the spaces and places they teach and study in. Geography is key to better understanding how educational spaces are constructed and experienced, and significantly, in considering how we can co-create more just and caring educational spaces. In this paper, we draw upon the emerging findings of research which used walking pedagogies and mapping to explore Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) students’ lived experiences of race and racism in London. We examine students’ experiences and perceptions of both their placement schools and of university life in London as a ‘world city’ (Massey, 2008). The study aims to contribute to the decolonisation of education, on the basis that decolonising education requires not only critical examination of the ‘canon’ of knowledge that students are introduced to (Hamilton, 2020) and how curricula represent people and places, but also active consideration of the purposes of education and how we respect, value and empower our students through pedagogy (hooks, 2003). The paper concludes by arguing that engaging with students lived experiences is both an act of care and of critical importance to engaging students in, and with, a critical conversation about the geographies of education spaces.
Positioning relational feed-forward as a caring pedagogy to enhance students’ affective responses to assessment

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Abstract

Receiving assessment feedback is inherently emotional for students. As such, instructors need to consider how to manage students’ responses to feedback so that they feel capable of improving their work and maintaining their wellbeing. In this presentation, we examine the emotional responses of undergraduate geography students to written assessment feedback and the role that instructor-student relational feed-forward can play in foregrounding student emotion, dissipating anxiety, and enabling productive learning attitudes and behaviours. We combine results from two qualitative projects running over the academic years 2015-2018 and 2019-2020. We thematically analysed semi-structured interviews and focus groups with students who experienced dialogic feed-forward on a single module in a British university. Our results demonstrate that many students struggled to receive and act upon negative feedback, carrying it as a burden, and associating it with a sense of personal failure. Positive feedback, by contrast, evoked intense but fleeting emotions, validating self-worth and increasing confidence. Relational feed-forward helped students to manage their emotions. Importantly, negative emotions arising from feedback did not dwell with these students as they had done previously with respect to written instructor commentary. Rather, relational feed-forward helped the students to feel positive about their work in real time, divorcing it from definitive comments about themselves. Our findings suggest that the relationship with the instructor is very important in encouraging students to seek wider support for their learning. We conclude by exploring academic strategies that purposely position relational instructor feed-forward as an act of care across the curriculum.
On Disruption, Disengagement, and Failure: Rethinking Energy Transitions Beyond Recovery, Creativity, and Hope

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Abstract

The energy transition is predominantly imagined as a sweeping developmental trajectory which moves regions collectively towards a more sustainable future and constitutes a necessary and desirable step forward. Scholarly reflections accordingly revolve around the production of, and the hopes attached to, related future-making projects. Yet these studies tend to be at risk of overestimating the efficacy of grassroots projects, obscuring dynamics of power and uneven development, and of reproducing normative conceptions of change and transition. Mobilising the theoretical lens of Tania Murray Li’s ‘Politics, Interrupted’ (2019), and adopting the perspective of sites characterised by conflict, disengagement, and disorientation rather than creativity and animation, my paper explores instead how future-making projects across individual, political, and corporate scales fail to take form. My arguments draw on eight months of fieldwork in an Eastern German coal mining town which grapples with environmental destruction, postsocialist shrinkage, an ageing population, labour market crisis, and municipal financial hardship at once. Here, individual, political, and corporate attempts to craft local futures face constant disruption – either by competing trajectories, environmental backlashes such as drought, landslides, and parasites, or global forces such as the Covid-19 pandemic or Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Responding to the call for more holistic ways of studying energy transitions, I propose to reconceptualise energy transitions as a problem space in which conflicting lifeworlds, sentiments, and trajectories wrestle, actualise, and/or falter in recurring cycles of impulses, pursuits, struggles, and disintegrations. In tracing these complex dynamics ethnographically, I aim to demonstrate the importance of including in the rather normative debates about transition and recovery also the possibility of non-engagement, regression, and failure.
Migrant Rural Place-Making and Neighbourhood Belonging in a Post-Conflict Society: A Study of Portuguese Communities in Northern Ireland
Neal Halforty, Gemma Catney, Ian Shuttleworth
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Abstract

Through global processes of rural diversification, migrants are now settling in a greater variety of places than ever before, outside of urban areas. More often this is occurring in places where inward migration is a relatively new phenomenon including in rural areas in the US and across Western Europe. Many of these regions are considered new immigration destinations, or ‘non-traditional’ locations. Within these spaces, migrants are active in creating new meanings, practices and identities that are formed by their interaction with longer-established local communities. This poster presentation will explore emerging themes from an extensive literature review on migrant place-making and neighbourhood belonging within new rural locales, which has received relatively little attention compared to processes associated with urban settlement and diversification. This review lays the foundation for a project focusing on Portuguese communities residing in rural Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland, a society traditionally segregated by religion/community background (Catholic, Protestant) has been undergoing a post-conflict transition over the past two decades, whilst also becoming a new immigration destination. Portuguese nationals are an under-researched minority group, despite being one of the largest ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland and having been so for a prolonged period. Qualitative research will be undertaken in the form of semi-structured interviews with Portuguese residents, community organisations and representatives in the Mid-Ulster and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council districts, to better understand the experiences of Portuguese migrants living in rural areas. Whilst Northern Ireland is a unique case because of its significant historical legacy, the findings will contribute to broader debates around rural diversification, particularly, but not limited to, post-conflict societies.
Visualising COP26: How COP26 was visually communicated by UK media

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Abstract

The 2021 Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow was a significant moment in the fight against climate change, and the public mostly get their information about COPs from news media. Visual representations of climate change issues have become an important area of study in recent years (O’Neill, 2019; Pearce et al., 2020). While research exists on the (textual and visual) frames used in media coverage of COPs (Wessler et al., 2016), there have been recent shifts in the visual representation of climate issues, particularly climate protest (Hayes & O’Neill, 2021). This study aims to identify the visual discourse of COP26 in UK news media, and to understand the role that photographer experiences and photo and wire agencies play in constructing that discourse. This study takes a mixed-methods qualitative visual content approach to analyse 1,335 images collected from eight leading UK newspapers over the duration of COP26. First, the denotative content of images was coded according to a codebook adapted from Wessler et al. (2016). Then, particularly common or salient visual themes were analysed in more detail using visual critical discourse analysis (Rose, 2016). Leading wire agency photographers at COP26 were also interviewed. Findings indicate a consistent visual discourse of COP26 reproduced by leading UK news organisations (though ideological differences exist), with depictions of people being most common. In particular, experiences of photographers (including access issues and professional relationships) and the power of wire agencies in constructing visual discourse is discussed. This study provides the first empirical analysis of the images used by UK media publications to visually represent COP26, and, unlike most studies in this area, takes a broader approach to understanding visual discourse, studying not only the images themselves but also the photographers and, crucially, the photo and wire agencies which are responsible for the vast majority of news images.
The Impact of Military Checkpoints

Maya Breau
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Abstract

This research assesses the impact of military checkpoints by investigating the feeling of security/insecurity among the population exposed to these checkpoints in urban locations. This contribution broadens checkpoints literature beyond the conventional scope of airport security, Israel-Palestine, violence, and gender, and bridges a gap in this literature, by drawing on the notion of affective atmospheres to explore communities’ everyday sentiments towards the role and functionality of military checkpoints. Against this background, I argue that military checkpoints are of vital importance in the overall reconstruction and stabilization of societies transitioning from conflict, whether by acting as a stimulant (safety) or as a deterrent (fear) and can provide us with an understanding of urban atmospheres in security practices. Atmospheres are crucial to researching everyday checkpoint practices as they affect how bodies experience the checkpoint as a spatial dispositive. For these reasons, this study will expand on the notion of affective atmospheres by highlighting its potential in a checkpoint setting particularly in post-conflict societies such as in Lebanon.
Beyond displacement: territorialization in the port city of Buenaventura, Colombia

Melanie Lombard
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Abstract

In (post-)conflict contexts, territorial struggles are strongly associated with the displacement of communities, whether rural-urban or intra-urban. Here, we argue for refocusing attention on territorialization processes as a means of understanding the dynamics and consequences of contestation between vulnerable minority communities and powerful groups. Focusing on the majority Afro-Colombian city of Buenaventura in the Pacific coastal region, which is simultaneously Colombia’s most significant port and one of its most neglected cities, we explore processes of de- and re-territorialization. Beyond tropes of displacement and resistance, territorialization offers a conceptual lens for understanding territorial struggles as complex events, in terms of the physical and symbolic effects of de-territorialization on communities and individuals, and re-territorialization as plural, disruptive practices of re-existence. This suggests the need to focus on everyday experiences as well as specific time- and space-bound moments of struggle. In this way, a territorialization approach permits a deeper understanding of the social production of territory with multiple elements relating to identity, symbolic practices and time-space dimensions.
Porosity: Letters to the Void

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University of Central Lancashire, UK

Abstract

Perceptions of landscape are determined by our geographic place in the world, formed through historical, social and cultural contexts. Our experience of landscape is predominantly led by vision, learned instincts, for many often seeking the desirable view. The restrictions of 2020 created a need to re-evaluate our terms of engagement with the world, the physical spaces we could explore became smaller. With normal boundaries and time suspended, new interactions enabled the potential to explore as never before.

Letters to the void is a conversation about relationships, conversations to speak directly to the imperceptible energies, which underscore human experience but, which often exceed our ability to capture or represent them. It is a conversation with subterranean landscapes, the invisible shaping the visible. Here the void is understood as a tension of Presence through Absence, sitting invisibly under the North West landscape. Invisible energy flowing below the surface, carving out ever-changing topographies of salt and water.

‘Imagine if there could be a geography of displacement. A geography that’s not predicated on the fiction of a fixed point. You could even call it, not necessarily a relational geography, but a relativistic geography’. Fred Moten

Letters to the Void is the beginning a conversation with the unseen.

I believe that ungraspable material forces affect human perception, which even if not perceived participates in our experience of being in the world. Lithographic drawings respond to energies revealed through water dowsing, specifically they consider the human body as a porous and receptive threshold for sensing and attuning to the experiences of its milieu.

www.porosity.co.uk www.tracyhill.co.uk
Boating beneath: spooky mobilities in the underworlds

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Abstract

The world has long been known to contain magical places, hidden landscapes that can be accessed, if only one knows the way. Myths exist across cultures that tell of such places and how they are reached, whether one is dead, lost, or seeking (Coulianiu, 1991). These tales of ancient methods of travel included means (boat, foot, flight), pathway (river, sea, sky, land), and access points (tree, barrow, cave), and the rules by which such endeavors could be safely undertaken (Eliade, 1951). The landscapes through which one passed held history, knowledge, spirits, and creatures; they were alive with meaning for those who understood the signs and signifiers. In the context of my wider survey, this paper will explore ancient boat journeys into the hidden worlds of Iceland, Ireland, and Wales. As such this paper will contribute to our understanding of spooky geographies by exploring how the method of movement through a landscape is an integral part of the experience.
Grief, guilt, and ghosts: collective memory and intergenerational trauma among queer Jews in postsecular Britain

Matthew Richardson
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

“I suppose it was lying in wait, hibernating in its lair in the forest, dormant until my pain awakened it... The mazzik appears as a figure with its head turned... all the way around. It is damned to look backwards, to stare into the past... When I am gone, the mazzik will find another broken person, someone else chained to some terrible pain they cannot let go. When it finds its next host, it will slowly consume their soul just as it did to me.”

The mazzik – as described above in Keith Thomas’ horror film The Vigil (2019) – is a horrifying spectre drawn to people’s suffering and pain. Grasping onto harrowing and traumatic memories, it haunts the principal characters through chilling apparitions and violent confrontations. In this paper, I use the mazzik as a metaphor to explore cultural trauma and collective memory among queer Jews in postsecular Britain.

Drawing on fifteen months of narrative ethnographic research with eighteen queer Jews, I approach collective memories of the Holocaust as an integral component to queer Jewish self-construal. Building on previous ‘spooky’ geographies, which view the phantasmal as subversive of social structure (Holloway, 2006), I go further to show how the shadows of intergenerational trauma manifest in radically contingent outcomes – from the imposition of heterosexist expectations of Jewish continuity to fomenting a progressive politics of resistance. This paper contributes also to the diversification of literature exploring transgenerational trauma through the language of ghosts, hauntings, and shadows (Mutsuoka, & Sorenson, 2005; Sugiman, 2005).
Retail Ruins: the Ghosts of Retail Capital

Jacob Miller
Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

In the context of widespread precarity and ongoing crises, it is no surprise that ruins have captured much attention in recent decades. This presentation introduces a new kind of ruin that has yet to be fully explored, one found at the intersection of urban geography and archaeology: the retail ruin, manifest in decrepit high streets, dead malls, and other scenes of abandonment, decline and dereliction. Crafting a hauntological approach, this project finds in these scenes a materiality that troubles consumer society because of its unique spatiality. In the ruinous shop window, we find a void in what is a sacred space for retail capital, a space where the consumerist spectacle enters daily life. Drawing on original photographs and fieldnotes from observations around Newcastle’s city centre, this presentation introduces the retail ruin not only as haunted, but as a force itself, one that demands new kinds of questions around space, subjectivity, and the kind of consumption we should bring into this world.
Beyond Bluff Creek: How the Non-Dupes Err in Bigfoot Field Research

Paul Kingsbury
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Abstract

Cryptozoology, the search for and study of animals whose existence is disputed or unsubstantiated, is widely dismissed because its purported evidence is the result of an error or hoax. Exemplary here is the iconic grainy one-minute long “Patterson- Gimlin” film shot in 1967 at Bluff Creek, north California, which allegedly depicts the retreat of a female Bigfoot. Skeptics routinely contend the hominid is a human being dressed in an ape costume. With the arrival of image stabilizing technology, doubts have not only lingered but intensified about what the clip depicts and are a key reason behind the growth in Bigfoot research organizations and expeditions across North America. But how exactly do Bigfoot researchers conduct field research on a giant bipedal primate that science and most people regard as non-existent or the result of deception? Drawing on my participation in four Bigfoot expeditions in British Columbia, Canada and Jacques Lacan’s notion of “the non-dupes wander” (les non-dupes errrent), I argue that Bigfoot fieldwork can be usefully understood as a type of “monkey business” (to echo a seasoned researcher) that embraces error and dupery in order to avoid the pitfalls of know-it-all certainty. Following Lacan, I suggest Bigfoot researchers are “good dupes,” that is, do not err or go off track by falling “in love with their unconscious” via transferential relationships with the supposed (un)knowns of so-called Squatchy landscapes. The success of Bigfoot fieldwork, then, is achieved in part on a symptomatic failure: the maintenance of a mystery that ultimately protects the knowledge in the Other.
Stonehenge and the A303: The Sacred and the Mundane

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Abstract

For many people, over thousands of years, Stonehenge has been a sacred place. It is one of the UK’s most well-known sites, woven into the folklore and identity of these islands in a way that few places are. It is also meters away from the A303, one of the busiest roads in Britain. The proximity of these two sites is a constant source of tension - one seen as mystical, magical, to be preserved and revered, the other noisy, polluting and generally unpleasant (but necessary). In this paper I want to explore exactly why there is such a contrast in attitudes towards them. The path taken by the A303 has been used as a route into the West Country for almost as long Stonehenge itself has stood there (if not longer). Other old paths are revered and seen as magical - as demonstrated by the popularity of books like Robert McFarlane’s The Old Ways or Jini Reddy’s Wanderland - so why isn’t this one? There are regular attempts to have the A303 rerouted or reconstructed so that it is out of view of the Stones and no longer intruding on the landscape. However, I argue that there is something just as sacred and magical about the continual presence of travellers by Stonehenge as there is about Stonehenge itself, and suggest that we need a new way of understanding and embracing these kinds of multi-layered, multi-era, unconventionally mystical landscapes.
Voices in a contested landscape: community identity, influence and upland management in the North York Moors National Park

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Abstract

The moorland plateau is the defining landscape of the North York Moors National Park. It reflects the everyday land management decisions of land managers and the complex ‘meshwork’ (Ingold 2011) of power relations between multiple stakeholders. The moorland is a contested space with debates over access, wildlife and habitat conservation, biodiversity, grouse shooting, land management and, ultimately, what are National Park landscapes for?

Through qualitative research and a heritage-landscape perspective, the paper analyses community influence over the management, use and ownership of this landscape to provide a greater understanding of the human-natural environment synergy in the National Park. It investigates power structures and land ownership, the ‘contests’ on the moorland, the role of upland communities and the Goathland Moor Regeneration Group - a local community group challenging the management of the moorland.

The paper presents the argument that North York Moors communities could be better represented in discussions on how landscapes are perceived, valued and managed. It proposes a co-operative, communication system which amalgamates key decision makers and residents and, therefore, involves a wider range of stakeholders in the landscape decision-making process. It suggests that this system can lead to more integrated landscape management and strategic planning where the ordinary citizen has more influence over land decisions and where nature has more opportunities to recover.

The research paper is from an AHRC funded PhD research project at Northumbria University in partnership with the Heritage Consortium Network at the University of Hull.
‘Moving Statues’: phenomenology and spectacular religiosity in 1980s Ireland

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Abstract

In 1985, Ireland was visited by the ‘Moving Statues Phenomenon’ when, at thirty-one sites, witnesses reported seeing statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary moving spontaneously. Most prominent was a grotto at the village of Ballinspittle, Co. Cork which attracted over 100,000 people that summer and retains a devoted following to this day. Greeted by piety, ridicule, curiosity, and scepticism, the events have left a lasting impact on the spiritual landscape. My paper uses a phenomenological lens to consider the embodied and em-placed implications of ‘moving statues’. This oxymoron prompts speculation on the overlap of the material and spiritual, the tangible and figural in plaster rendered to personify the Mother of Jesus Christ. Performativity and affect are central to understanding these events in which the divine was manifest for several months at religious sites in Ireland. Using contemporary accounts, I elaborate on how a distinct and uneasy geography was crafted in the meeting of a social phenomenon, Irish Roman Catholicism, and roadside statues. The paper contributes to discussions of peripheral spiritual landscapes and their interfaces with materialities and the more-than human.
...should this forest know about Donna Haraway? Ontological conflict and the (supernatural) other-than-humans in the Hungarian countryside

Eva Mihalovics
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Abstract

Based on my ethnographic research and using Blaser’s notion on a still ongoing colonial ontological war (Blaser 2014), this presentation asks how to take seriously a supernatural entity, a certain forest in Central Eastern European Hungary?

Blaser (2014) suggests that colonial violence manifests in an ontological war where non-western realities and natures struggle to be acknowledged against western makings of the world. Posthumanism is a part of the ongoing conflict. Several decolonial thinkers point out (Blaser 2014, Sundberg 2014) that the so far dominant, western type of posthumanisms tend to prioritise technological other-than-humans compared to (non-western) supernatural ones like spirits, to avoid ‘the taint of superstition, animism, […] and other pre-modern attitudes’ (Bennett 2010, p 53). This means that other, non-western kinds of worlds and natures face difficulties when making their way into posthumanist academic knowledge production. Combining decolonial authors from CEE1 (Tlostanova 2015, Koobak and Marling 2014) with decolonial posthumanist critique, my research deals with the possible existence of Other natures and their (supernatural) other-than-humans in the Hungarian countryside.

Hungary, and the CEE semi-peripheries are not far enough to be recognised and acknowledged as potentially different by and from the west, but many times get constructed as its handy inner Others or pathological region (Boatcă 2012), stuck in an underdeveloped past, in the constant need of catching up. This presentation asks what does this ambiguous, blurred Otherness mean for the supernatual entities of the Hungarian countryside? How do we recognise and acknowledge the possible existence of not-entirely western natures and worlds in the border zones of Europe? How should we approach, speak for, and let a forest speak for itself, which lays in mountains ‘colonised by the wrong (subaltern) empires’ (Morozov 2015), the Ottomans, the Habsburgs, the Soviet Union?
Cumbria: A Landscape of Living Dead

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Abstract

From folk horror to gothic literature, movies to novels, ghosts and other supernatural beings have become actors. Ghosts and similar beings are also important in promoting places in the tourist industry, and there are guided tours in such places or homes or flats are rented to stay with ghosts. The British Isles are full of places, haunted by dead people never leaving their homes. The tradition of ghosts and spirits goes back to pagan times, and Samhain turned into Halloween, now celebrated across the world when we commemorate the dead. From the centre of large cities to isolated parts of the rural, from ruined castles and manor houses to cemeteries and asylums, the British landscape feed the ever-growing canon on ghosts.

What do ghosts provide to places other than identity or “soul”? Do we need ghosts in a world becoming more and more soulless and mechanic? Do ghosts protect places against further damage or increase the number of visitors? The paper focuses on two types of “haunted landscape”. The first is the ghosts making the tourist landscape of Cumbria, by ghost walks and haunted hotels and b&bs. The second is about the uncanny landscape of Cumbria, seen in legends and stories about several places across the county. By demonstrating how “ghosts of ghosts” make and remake this famous landscape, the paper will question the meaning of life/death, touristification/heritage, natural/supernatural, normal/paranormal and modern/superstitious. The paper also demonstrates that haunted places provide us with the ambition to study more and go beyond modern sciences’ borders. These places are also protected from further damage since they are considered dangerous or uncanny. They are antagonisms to the idea that we (can) know everything. These places also demonstrate that ghosts are living actors working together with humans in making the spatial and cultural heritage, i.e. the heritage of the living dead.
Spooky geography: pyramidology and the Bosnian valley of the pyramids

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Abstract

In the depths of central Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Visočica, a very pointy landscape feature, towers over the small city of Visoko. It has for the last decade become the centre of a theory that the Fojnička valley houses a system of pyramids linked via a labyrinth of prehistoric underground tunnels. In this paper, we are not interested in disproving the theory that there is a valley of pyramids here built thirty thousand years ago. Rather, we think with pyramidology and spooky archaeology through the Bosnian pyramid scheme to enter questions of depth, layering the substantive and otherworldly. Questions of the very landscape are at stake here, as this story rewrites the depths and folds, the mountain structures themselves and the ground of the valley floor. In Visoko, we unearth the stories of all of the sites discovered to be part of the Bosnian valley of the pyramids and intercut this otherworldly tale with a story of the regional cultural landscape of BiH. While the spooky and supernatural are explored, the paper also recovers some of the substantive nature of landscape as the pyramid scheme enables a different way of engaging with the materiality of earth through pyramidology.
Urban vacancy and discard studies in dialogue: interrogating framings and responses in Irish cities

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Abstract

This paper asks how conceptualisations of waste and discard inform and are transformed through the framing of, and responses to, vacant and derelict sites and buildings. I draw upon research undertaken in three cities in the Republic of Ireland where vacancy and dereliction are proclaimed as a form of vandalism and waste, particularly in light of an ongoing and intensifying housing crisis (Hearne, 2020). In this context, public calls for effective reuse and frustration over current policy responses suggest a reliance upon generalised, property-based, and dichotomised interpretation of waste. However, responses to this discrepancy rarely question the particular circumstances, assumptions surrounding productive use, and the diverse relations that produce vacancy and dereliction.

Vacancy and dereliction have long been topics of interest within urban geography, but have received comparatively less attention within discard studies beyond engagement with wastelands, ruins, and demolition (Beveridge et al., 2022; Gambetta, 2019). Nevertheless, discard studies’ attention to specificity, materiality, transformation, contingency, and value offers a productive framework for critically engaging with urban vacancy and dereliction. Likewise, vacancy studies have more recently begun to engage with the ambivalent ways such spaces might constitute ‘waste’ that is recirculated in material, discursive and financialised ways (Beveridge et al., 2022; O’Callaghan et al., 2018). In this paper, I attend to the spatial, relational, and material particularity of a site and building in Dublin to challenge universalised presumptions and interpretations of vacancy and dereliction. I then reflect on how narrow imaginaries of vacancy and dereliction as disuse or vandalism offer particularly interesting insights for discard studies’ critical engagement with property (Lau, 2022). Finally, I suggest that investigating vacancy in relation to reuse highlights the disjunction between speculative calculations of value (particularly due to land valuations and development potential) and material and labour costs of maintenance, repair, and regeneration.
Falling between the (green) cracks? Exploring green space provision for young people’s mental wellbeing

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Abstract

Emerging research regarding the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic indicates that young people are one of the most negatively affected groups, including in terms of mental health outcomes. Meanwhile, the evidence base for the positive effect nature, including parks and green spaces, has on young people’s mental health and wellbeing continues to develop. Yet, 16–25-year-olds make fewer visits to urban parks and green spaces than other age groups. This occurs for varied reasons, including lack of access, feelings of exclusion, and cuts to available programs and activities, ultimately limiting opportunities to realise the mental health benefits these spaces can provide young urban residents.

Using primary survey and focus-group data collected from London residents aged 16-25, our research explores the barriers that young people identify as affecting their access to and use of green spaces, as well as the self-reported impacts these barriers have on their mental health and wellbeing through access to nature. We then compare this data with mapping analysis of available programs and activities aimed at supporting young people and their mental wellbeing, particularly those from marginalised communities.

Results examine disparities between young people’s green space preferences and existing approaches to green space provision, as well as the impact these disparities may have on their mental wellbeing. With improving young people’s access and use of public green spaces featuring in London’s post-pandemic recovery and national efforts to ‘build back better,’ these findings present implications for policymakers, planners and others involved in delivering green spaces that engage young people, facilitate their active use, and positively contribute to their mental health.
Climate change after COVID-19: Challenges and opportunities to transform the Irish transport sector

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Abstract

Wide-ranging behavioural changes were introduced in Ireland following the outbreak of COVID-19. Among other sectors, these changes have had a transformative societal effect on transport.

Global carbon emissions decreased by 6.4% in 2020 (Tollefson, 2021), decreasing by 5.9% in Ireland (SEAI, 2021). Given Ireland’s commitments to a 7% annual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030, these temporary reductions in 2020 need to be consolidated into greater sustained reductions to achieve national and international climate commitments. Transport is responsible for ~20% of all GHG emissions in Ireland. To meet its climate change obligations, Ireland requires a transformative approach to transport.

The transformative potential of the sector is evident in Ireland’s transport emissions decreasing by 17% in 2020 (SEAI, 2021). However, emissions have already risen since these SEAI research findings were published, thus a greater effort is needed to ensure these reductions are sustained. The pandemic has provided a window of opportunity for researching how long-term sectoral transformation could be achieved to meet Ireland’s climate change commitments. Examples of these changes include: large scale modal shifts to public and active travel, decarbonisation zones, reduction in airline travel, significant decline in private car ownership and sustained remote working.

This paper will introduce the overall project, it's approaches and research design. This project addresses a knowledge gap by investigating attitudes towards transport and travel, while also assessing how behavioural changes enforced by COVID-19 travel restrictions have potential long-term ramifications regarding Ireland’s climate goals. Specifically, the research design of the project centres on bottom-up and top-down experiences of this crisis and to what extent this can be translated into long-term change in the transport sector. The paper will detail the project’s progress to date and present early data from the survey if available.
Rhythm-energies remade, reconnected and recovered: engaging rhythmanalysis with low carbon futures

Gordon Walker
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Abstract

Rhythmic, spatiotemporal structures run through everyday life, through social institutions and ecological and climatic systems, with energy flows intrinsic to the material manifestation of rhythms. Carbon economies have fundamentally transformed relations between human and more than human rhythms, with energy systems bringing the fossilized temporalities of carbon resources into tightly coordinated rhythms of commodification, combustion and consumption, in turn generating catastrophically arrhythmic consequences for the repetitions of climate and environment. In this paper, I bring Lefebvre and Regulier’s rhythmanalysis to bear on energy and carbon in order to both diagnose the ruptures and rhythmic fragmentations of the climate crisis and to explore the breaking, recovery and remaking of polyrhythmic relations that transformation to post carbon necessarily involves. Multi-sited transitions in rhythms I argue are fundamental to living differently with energy within temporally recalibrated and de-carbonised techno-energy infrastructures. Examples from across different scales of change and action are used to follow the imagined and intended beats and pulses, in space and time, of future rhythm-energy entanglements.
Online festival experiences, eventscapes and cultural value

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Abstract

Cultural festivals are associated with many different values and functions, such as building social cohesion, community identity, developing social and cultural capital, and contributing to personal identity construction through transformational experiences.

Although there has been much research on consumption of cultural services, there has been less on visitor experience, and what factors contribute to such experiences, which are essentially subjective and personal.

Recent research has started to disaggregate visitor experience into cognitive, physical and affective engagement, and a “novelty” dimension. Linked to this is the theory of “eventscapes” which describes both the physical attributes as well as the intangible elements of a festival visitor’s experience, which can be extended to “e-eventscapes,” which describe the attributes of online visitor experiences.

Lockdown measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, resulted in the large-scale cancellation of cultural festivals and events in 2020 and 2021: Of the 230 cultural festivals that took place in 2019, only 122 were held in 2020, and only 95 in 2021.

Many festivals shifted to online events in an attempt to continue providing value for audiences, sponsors and artists. Two such are the National Arts Festival and the Klein Karoo Nationale Kustefees which are the focus of this paper. Using data from visitor surveys and interviews with festival managers, the paper explores the process of the shift to online and the online festival experience of visitors and other stakeholders.

Despite quite high overall festival visitor experience ratings, visitors missed the “vibe” and social aspects of the live events. The festivals did reach new audiences via the online format, and both management teams expect the continued use of hybrid (online and in-person) models in the future. Translating their unique identity into the online space through the development of e-eventscapes is thus likely to continue to be important.
Moral Geographies of Discard beyond the West: Secondhand clothing in China

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Abstract

Critical accounts have examined the uneven geographies of the discarding consumer goods and their entanglement in global recycling networks and eventual reuse or abandonment. These have highlighted a broad tendency for goods to move from affluent consumers in the Global North to recycling operatives in the Global South. The rise of a global middle class of consumers within poorer countries suggests not only then a changing geography of consumer demand but also a changing geography of disposal, with more post-consumer waste being generated within the Global South. In this context, the paper looks at China that until 2018 was a major destination for used materials. The impact of its decision to prohibit that trade still echo through recycling markets in the Global North. Less commented upon is its concurrent emergence as a source of used and recyclable materials. In terms of clothing, in less than 20 years the usage rate (how many times an item is worn before being discarded) has fallen by 70%. Chinese consumers are now a major source of used clothing, with no mature systems for utilising the materials. Based on survey work in Guangzhou this paper explores consumer attitudes to discarding, reusing or recycling clothing. It couples this with material from key actors in processing used clothing in the province of Guangdong. The paper suggests that there is a stronger moral geography to consumer attitudes towards donating and using secondhand clothing, but a practical geography that echoes much that happens in the Global North and continued informal channels that echo reclamation elsewhere in the Global South. There is a clash between the hopes and values expressed and these current realities.
Unclean Space: Race Religion and Food in the Atlantic Era

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Abstract

One way of approaching the problem of Euro-African racial animosity is through an understanding of the ‘unclean’ in the Judeo-Christian tradition and from the perspective of the Christians during the Atlantic era (c.mid-15th to 19th Century).

In ‘The Abominations of Leviticus’, Mary Douglas discusses various premises for pollution, defilement, and contamination as it relates to the Old Testament of the Christian Bible through an analysis of animals that must not be eaten by virtue of the animal itself or of its association with pagans.

In the context of the Atlantic Era, when the Portuguese arrive in West Africa in 1455, they report of a people who partake in abominable acts of feeding, clothing, religious observance, and sexual behaviour. Thus, following the papal Bull of Pope Nicholas V in 1452, they have sufficient justification to reduce these (and other) pagans to perpetual slavery, and sealing the fate of West Africans (and later Central Africans) or anyone mixing with them for the next four centuries. In that period, the concept of the filthy African would be imprinted in the collective consciousness of Africans and Europeans.

This paper is based on ongoing research into the nomenclature ‘Afro-Brazilian Architecture’ in the context of coastal West Africa. It considers the extent of penetration by the Portuguese through the lenses of feeding and abomination, and the extent to which these have been imprinted on the landscape. It is based on an analysis of the text ‘Fusion Foodways of Africa’s Gold Coast in the Atlantic Era’ and looks to contribute to ongoing academic research into the understanding of race and the infrastructures of its administration.
Spatio-temporal schismogenesis: the contradictory temporalities of Palestinian spatial materialities

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Abstract

As the enduring struggles in Israel-Palestine continue, on both sides of the Green Line, temporary and often transportable spaces are being constantly created and transformed as an inseparable part of the Israeli settler colonial practices and the Palestinian fight against them. Temporary spaces created for expansion, exclusion, and resistance, such as Israeli settler outposts and Palestinian refugee and protest camps repeatedly and swiftly emerge and change, creating the enduring ephemeral landscape of the territory. These spatio-temporalities sometimes create contradictory if not paradoxical relationships between materiality and their spatiopolitical meaning. The urbanised Palestinian refugee camps, for example, with houses composed mostly of concrete, are still considered as temporary spaces, functioning as a core manifestation of the Nakba and the Palestinian existence as people without a state. Differently, the temporary-looking materiality of the unrecognised villages of the Negev Palestinian Bedouin population, with houses primarily composed of light structures covered by corrugated still sheets, convey the practices of 'staying put' which challenge, through holding tightly to claimed lands and a related form of life, the Israeli regime's discriminatory practices of expulsions and expropriations of the Palestinians.

The term schismogenesis, coined by Bateson (1936), refers to the process through which an individual or a group define themselves through a differentiation in the norms resulting from interaction with others. Drawing on the two aforementioned Palestinian built environments of the refugee camp and the unrecognised villages, this paper explores the expressions of schismogenesis in the Palestinian spatiotemporal realities, in their real and symbolic meanings. Schismogenesis, as a definition through negation, this paper argues, is reflected in the paradoxical temporal meanings of the materialities of Palestinian spatial formations which subvert the ordinary meanings of the materials and structures that create their environments of struggle.
Looking either side of the kerb: household waste disposal practices and (dis)connected geographies of value

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Abstract

A great deal of institutional time, effort and financial resources go into trying to get householders in the UK to discard of their waste in the correct way and in so doing limit contamination, environmental leakage, improve recyclability, and maximise economic value. Nevertheless, recycling rates remain poor and levels of contamination and leakage high. Uninformed and/or indifferent consumers commonly get the blame. In turn, policymakers aim at curbing consumer behaviour through increased messaging and penalties. Drawing on 60 interviews and a trial with 30 households, which involved providing a bin to collect all plastics in over two weeks, we challenge the idea that consumers are uninformed and/or indifferent, and bring into question associated policy approaches. We do so as part of revealing the variegated socio-material roots of household waste plastics disposal. These roots lie in shared conventions of practices and in more specific circumstances and periodicities of the life course. Together, these features inform the quantity, quality, and value of waste streams and recyclate. We discuss these dynamics and associated dimensions of value in reference to three pragmatic registers: ‘materials’; ‘treatment’; and, ‘bins’. Building on and developing existent literature on discard economies, our analysis involves ‘looking’ either side of the kerb – knitting together the importance of what happens in homes with material recovery practices and facilities aimed at producing quality recyclate. Drawing on our findings, we call for more bespoke policy approaches, which are premised on a sensitivity for practices of discard and their effects in reference to specific infrastructural arrangements. We outline what such approaches could entail, with attention centred on aligning practices and values to avoid contamination and leakage pertaining to household waste streams.
The Greening of the Post-Covid High Street: Potentialities and Pitfalls

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Abstract

With the profound and accelerating decline of the High Street as a place for retail traditionally supported by high levels of footfall, this paper aims to evaluate the emerging and growing popular movement for the ‘greening’ and repurposing of the High Street. Whilst there is a vast body of literature demonstrating the environmental and social benefits of greenspace generally, this paper proposes specifically exploring the greening of the High Street and city centres to evaluate its potentiality and pitfalls in a post-Covid environment. Environmental benefits include helping buildings and cities to achieve net-zero carbon emissions and contributing to urban agriculture whilst social benefits include facilitating social interaction between different social groups, reducing overcrowding in city/town centres and creating a more attractive and healthier urban realm. However, there are also profound questions about the potential (further) privatisation of public space. The paper therefore contributes to and critically evaluates the juxtaposition between the neoliberalisation of city centres with calls for cities to reorientate their primary policy objectives away from economic growth towards an ethic of ‘care’.
The importance of place and (super)diversity in shaping new understandings of nicotine and tobacco consumption

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Abstract

While inequalities in nicotine/tobacco use have largely been explored from the perspective of socio-economic status (SES) or class, there has been little focus to date on the ways in which multiple aspects of population diversity – including SES, age, gender, race/ethnicity, nationality, religion and immigration status – intersect differentially in the context of particular places to shape the use of nicotine/tobacco products. Through a place-based approach focused on a ‘superdiverse’ urban neighbourhood in the UK (Handsworth, Birmingham), which has experienced increasing demographic complexity, this paper highlights how culture, ethnicity and gender - as well as neighbourhood deprivation and sense of place - intersect differentially to create specific pathways and spaces of use for traditional, new and alternative nicotine and tobacco products. In so doing, the paper also identifies how there is a need for place and diversity to be brought to the fore of contemporary discussions of place-based public health in order to fully understand the complexity of such consumption practices and the appropriateness of public health interventions to mitigate.
Relations of Data and the City: A Possible Pre-history of Platforms and Datafication

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Abstract

The rapid proliferation of ride-hailing mobility platforms such as Uber and Ola (an Indian mobility start-up) signal the incursion of materialities, logics and discourses of a “computational city” (Mattern 2017) that gather momentum to build a predictive and flexible mobility regime (Sheller 2019). The anointment of data as capital has transformed many sectors of the economy by providing subsidized services and tapping into data markets, part of what could be called platform capitalism (Srnicek 2016). In this paper, I suggest that platforms may generate new power relations and politics at various scales via datafication, but this is not a process without antecedents: in fact, it is an ongoing process since the 1990s, and platforms are only the recent iteration of controlling and governing mobilities of machines and populations through the data-driven management of India’s roads. I scrutinize one such (pre-digital) site by tracing the trajectory of installing global positioning system (GPS) devices/GPS meters in autorickshaws or three-wheeled scooter rickshaws (TSRs) in Delhi from 2004 to 2019. Some of the questions I explore are—what are the political ends to which these data-driven technologies are deployed in cities? What are the similarities and differences between such pre-digital sites and the computational logics of ride-hailing platforms? The significance of this paper lies in its exploration of the effects of “unsuccessful” technologies in creating an iterative, techno-political regime that legitimizes and normalizes the deployment of platform technologies towards inequitable ends.
Voices from the Cultural Backstages

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Abstract

This paper introduces the concept of urban backstage (Theatrum Mundi, 2019) to draw attention to individuals and underlying infrastructural conditions that support diversity and equity in cultural productions. Backstages as infrastructures embed complex relationships and evolving interactions between physical space, individuals, their activities, and resources supporting and enabling cultural production in cities. Regarding the growing interest in the creative industries and their influence on urban planning and regeneration strategies, the concept is applied to counter the territorial economically driven understanding of cultural production in cities, but also to explore how to support cultural backstages and the practices they inhabit. The focus of this study is on the neighbourhood of Gutto d’or in Paris, which acts as an ecology for inhabiting immigrants from West African countries- previously colonised by France- for a concentration of particularly food and clothing businesses catering to and run by these communities. The research provides empirical insights from these small-scale, independent, and often invisible cultural producers who operate from the margin of the creative sector in the city. The individuals who run, manage, and work in these spaces highlight the infrastructural conditions, namely legal, financial and social networks allowing them stability in their practice, as well as granting them levels of visibility and recognition in the society from which they have been previously excluded. The solidarity among the minority ethnic groups in the neighbourhood is a local quality that reinforces their local knowledge in cultural production with wider (global) impact. The quality of cultural backstages and their complex set of networks and contextual relationships should be discussed beyond cultural studies, to be included in regeneration strategies and infrastructural development to safeguard diversity in urban culture.
Patients’ Waiting at Beit Hanoun “Erez” border in Gaza under the Israeli Occupation: Let Live or Let Die

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Abstract

This paper examines the politics of life and death at Erez “Beit Hanoun” border/checkpoint in Gaza, Palestine. It investigates how a health system that is subject to a debilitating siege affects patient care: many medicines cannot enter, medics are unable to travel for specialist training and patient exit permits (for treatment outside Gaza) are delayed or refused. The substance of the paper focuses on patients’ waiting as a multiple space of hope or despair, not-belonging or not being ‘in-time’ with others – and often as a form of resistance or sumud. These contrasting emotions and states connect to the practice of waiting and are thus importantly spatial as they control and delimit the movement of bodies. My aim in this paper is to illustrate how patients experience eventual prospects of waiting, in clear terms: waiting for life (through permit to get treated) or waiting for death (through permit refusal). Based on first-hand accounts of patients and their families in Gaza on these stark prospects, I will argue that waiting produces a complex admixture of ‘cruel optimism’ and a form of sumud fused with both hope and despair.
Feelerings: The Sensorial Experience of Waiting in COVID-19 Shopping Queues

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Abstract

The first UK national lockdown necessitated by the SARS CoV-2 virus and ensuing government mitigation measures, was a catalyst for intense sensory scenes. Interactions with people and mundane objects such as shopping trolley handles, created the potential for touch and being touched to activate new forms of sensory hypervigilance. Touching is relational, touching and being touched always coincide. As such, what we touch and how we touch it can be the catalyst for affective responses and sensations. In COVID-19 shopping queues, sensory hypervigilance took the form of heightened corporeal attention, a reticence of touch, an acute sensory awareness of the threat of contamination from the virus.

Taking a ‘gastropodic feelerings’ approach and written through texture, this paper experiments with language and form to express how sensory hypervigilance informed waiting in queues during the first UK lockdown. Based on the experiences of waiting in twenty-two shopping queues in the North East of England, this paper focusses on forms of sensorial alertness and acclimatisation experienced whilst waiting. The paper will firstly consider waiting and the senses. It will then outline and consider what ‘gastropodic feelerings’ can open as a writing device. Then working with ‘feelerings’ and the work of queer and cultural theorists, the paper elucidates concepts of surface and intensity in order to articulate the morphologies of sensation experienced whilst waiting in Covid-19 shopping queues.
Do I really like to shift to rail? Influence of rail modernisation on passenger preferences and travel behaviour

Simona Surmařová, Michaela Neumannová, Vilém Pařil, Petr Hlinskiovský, Martin Vrána
Masaryk University, Czechia

Abstract

As time goes on, the emphasis on environmentally friendly solutions or environmental behaviours is steadily increasing, and they are also gaining a stronger position in the transport sector. The topic of this article is the discussion of the long-term European initiative shift to rail. This initiative is confronted with historical facts, using the rail link between Prague and Pilsen. Numerous modernisation activities have been carried out on this line and have led to a qualitative change in transport, albeit on a conventional railway line and not on the HSR. The paper aims to evaluate whether, in the long run, a significant rail infrastructure upgrade leads to a change in transport and residential behaviour.

In this paper, the change in ridership, frequency and travel time are considered as key indicators of the fundamental change in the quality of service caused by the modernisation of the line. These changes are then contrasted with a self-conducted survey among passengers on the line, which identifies individual preferences and motives for transport behaviour and its changes through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The results show that a relatively expensive upgrade of a conventional rail line (comparable in cost to the construction of the HSR in Spain) achieved significant savings in travel time of 17% and motivated operators to increase frequency by almost 50%. All this increased ridership to more than double. Nevertheless, passengers’ view on this crucial change of rail service supply corresponds with the importance of speed and other factors such as services, comfort, or on the other side, difficult parking situation in Prague. The results confirmed the crucial long-term benefit in the possibility of not relocating to metropolitan centres given new attractive travel time conditions for regular commuting.
Making an international education hub? Universities’ offshore campuses and urban imagininations of the global knowledge-based economy in Dubai

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Abstract

This paper focuses on worlding cities as ‘international education hubs’ and the associated role of urban imaginaries. Conducting an in-depth case study, I empirically analyse universities’ location strategies for establishing offshore campuses in Dubai through qualitative interviews with university managers. By tracing how university managers process, utilise and adapt urban imaginaries of Dubai, and by juxtaposing these cognitive mappings with the governmental material-cum-discursive strategies to position Dubai in the global knowledge-based economy, I investigate the authentic meaning of Dubai’s purported role as an international education hub. I conceptualise the notion of education hub as an urban imaginary of the knowledge-based economy in the making that particularly materialises around Dubai’s transnational education zones and serves to position Dubai in the global economy of flows as a place of higher learning and innovation, but is at the same time firmly rooted in the political economy of prevalent imaginaries of Dubai as a global city for business and tourism. Thereby, the paper not only points to a rift between expectation and reality, and to the aspiratory character of this worlding strategy of Dubai’s government, but it also provides fresh insights into how the decision-making processes of elites that produce education hubs within an increasingly internationalising and commercialising higher education landscape intersect with globalising cities.
The effect of limited financial resources on mobility. A qualitative case study of low-income older people’s travel practices

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Abstract

Being mobile is a prerequisite for social participation (Schwanen et al., 2015; Social Exclusion Unit, 2003). However, as transport always involves costs, this relationship poses a challenge for people on low incomes. Financial poverty is one of the key challenges of an ageing society. For example, in Germany, approximately 18% of people aged 65 and over are currently affected by or threatened with financial poverty (Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2021) and almost half of people over 18 express fears of being affected by financial poverty in later life (Ahrendt et al., 2017). To understand in more depth how financial poverty affects older people and their travel practices and how they cope with their limited financial resources, we conducted 14 qualitative problem-centred interviews with low-income older people (aged 60 and above) in Ronnenberg (Hanover region, Germany).

In my presentation, I will present and discuss the results of these interviews. Although all the respondents have comparably limited financial resources, we identified three different types of low-income older people by their travel practices: (i) active older people with multifaceted social interactions, (ii) neighbourhood-oriented older people with local interactions and (iii) home-centred older people with few social interactions. These three types differ in their transport mode options, social interactions and their coping strategies with limited financial resources. Additionally, we used the practice theory perspective to analyse in more depth low-income older people's travel practices along the elements of materials, competences and meanings (Shove et al., 2012). Thereby, we revealed that low financial resources are reflected in all elements of low-income older people's travel practices and may lead to transport-related barriers to social participation.
The power of nature, using the natural environment to treat eco-anxiety: A case study of recreational Litter picking

Thomas Roberts
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Abstract

As the impacts of climate change become more obvious and the gravity of its impact becomes apparent, we are seeing a dramatic rise in individuals experiencing distressing mental health issues, often termed eco-anxiety (Pihkala 2018). As concerns grow, not only about climate change, but its impact on mental health Psychologists have started to explore a range of treatments (See Baudon and Jachens 2021 for a full review). Many of these treatments involve immersing oneself in the natural environment and undertaking individual or collective action geared towards mitigating the impacts of climate change and environmental damage. The principle behind these approaches is that the natural environment is used as a space for reflection, resourcing, and inspiration (Baudon and Jachens 2021), and the activities undertaken help to empower sufferers to overcome feelings of hopelessness. One activity which incorporates both criteria is litter picking. The natural environment can offer an eco-antidote to burnout and inspires participants, while the action of collecting waste can provide a sense of achievement and encourage participants to feel that they are making a positive contribution.

In recent years recreational littler picking has become an increasingly popular pastime, furthermore many outdoor enthusiasts are combining litter picking with other activities including, running (Plogging), cycling, mountaineering and scuba diving. This paper will explore the therapeutic benefits of undertaking litter picking and explore the impact of making a positive contribution while immersed in a range of different natural environments can have on the wellbeing of eco-anxiety sufferers.
Urban university in the (post-)developmental state: a case study of Singapore

Do Young Oh
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Abstract

This paper investigates the transformation process of campus space in response to various socio-economic and political processes. To do so, it focuses on Singapore’s recent university campus expansion project and its relation to globalisation. It is often argued that Anglophone universities have been transformed through mobilising the logics of corporatisation, competitiveness, commercialisation (Robertson, 2010). However, in East Asian countries, while neoliberal rhetoric is also embedded in society, interventionist approaches to universities are still found due to the legacy of the development state (Singh, 2019). In this regard, this paper challenges a conventional understanding of the university campus space as a vehicle for producing knowledge, as Addie (2017) problematises such an understanding of the university as a monolithic rational agent. The university space needs to be understood as more contextual and processual, reflecting socio-economic and political conditions of society, as argued by Haar (2010). To promote a more nuanced understanding of university space, this paper will compare the campus development process of the National University of Singapore in the 1970s and the 2000s. The recent campus expansion of the National University of Singapore shows the emergence of entrepreneurial universities in Singapore and the impact of globalisation in higher education. However, various state interests also intervened in conducting the large-scale campus expansion project. Such a process confirms that the hybridity of the developmental state and neoliberal globalisation is reflected in the university space in East Asia.
Eating locally grown vegetables: a marketing challenge in the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

Connecting horticultural production to consumption areas has always been a challenge in the United Arab Emirates since the 1950s, when the British introduced most of the vegetables that are grown in the country nowadays. Imported products have been favoured over the marketing of domestic crops because of the price and quality competition from abroad, the coastal concentration of metropolises whose inhabitants are mainly immigrants, and the almost complete absence of medium-sized cities inland that could have helped to structure distribution networks. The reliance on imported food is a concern as crises that undermine food security, like soaring food prices or the covid-19 pandemic, have become more and more frequent. Government authorities have encouraged local production through turnkey irrigated plots, the provision of free services to farmers, "Local Harvest" labels, and financial support for the construction of hydroponic greenhouses. While family farms have long been supported, large companies – including multinationals – are eventually on the point of winning significant market shares with locally grown vegetables. The environmental issue is complex: farming the desert necessitates a high level of artificialisation and nonrenewable resources, but can reduce imports through sea transport that is a major source of GHG emission.
The transformations of food supply chains in Hanoi (Vietnam): locally embedded food systems and state-driven modernization

Michaël Bruckert
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Abstract

In Hanoi (Vietnam), dietary changes, urban sprawl, and political-economic reconfigurations challenge the way the city supplies its food. A dense network of spatially distributed public wholesale markets, retail markets and street markets have long since catered to the urban demand for fresh fruits, vegetables, and meat, mainly procured locally or in neighboring provinces through a limited number of intermediaries. This physical and organizational proximity has fostered resilience and a rather fair distribution of value and power in the supply chains. They have also favored interpersonal trust in the transactions and sustained a green belt around the city. Yet, the State and the Municipality now promote the private sector and market forces (especially supermarkets, e-commerce platforms, and a new public-private wholesale market) as a way to modernize the system of food supply, to ensure food safety and to increase value-added.

Based on field surveys and on an involvement in multi-stakeholder workshops with municipal authorities, this paper will address the impacts that modernization policies and “supermarketization” could bring about on Hanoi’s locally embedded food system. It will reflect upon potential sociotechnical innovations and planning strategies at different scales to reconcile sustainable and short food supply chains with the Municipality’s quest for a “modern food system”.
What planning scale for the relocation of agriculture? Insights from French food planning cases

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Abstract

Food planning has emerged as a new field of planning which aims to restructure local food systems. The spatial scale remains a tricky question. From foodsheds’ perspectives, researchers emphasise city-region scale and suggest different geographical delimitations may be appropriate for the different aspects of food planning. From a governance perspective, studies address that city-region scales require cross-scale collaboration. Yet, few empirical studies have been taken to answer the question, which drives our research on how food planning at different scales intervenes differently in relocating agriculture.

We will present the first results based on case studies on French local food projects (projets alimentaires territoriaux) at different scales (from municipal to départemental). We first compare various action fields on agriculture concerned by food planning at different scales. Those action fields are farmland preservation, farming practices, and food infrastructures. We then explore how authorities define "local" and how they break/are limited by the boundaries when the spatial boundary is not the same as the administrative boundary. We pay special attention to the role of the traditional planning field and focus on how food planning and land-use planning interact at different scales. The results will contribute to food planning design and planning research.
How sustainable are HEIs commercial practices? Understanding the impact of London branch campuses’ closure on their learners’ experience

Bryte Amponsah
University College London, UK

Abstract

For London branch campuses, the capital serves as a commercial space that presents opportunities from which a marketing narrative can be developed as part of their student recruitment strategies (QAA, 2014; Brooks and Waters, 2018; Kleibert, 2021). The argument in this paper is that these institutions have a strong awareness of students’ preference for big cities and desirable postcodes over peripheral locations in which their main campuses may be located in, and have developed physical infrastructures in response. Since 1999, London has seen the arrival of 21 branch campuses (QAA, 2014; Kleibert, 2021). The practice has been profitable for many of these institutions to the extent that some now run multiple intakes a year, while others have acquired new physical spaces in order to accommodate their increasing student numbers (Altbach and De Wit, 2021; Coventry University, 2020). However, considering 6 out of the 21 campuses have since shut their doors, and the increased interrogation of the quality of the teaching and student experience they provide, has led to the questioning of the sustainability of the franchising model in Higher Education, and how the increasing commercialisation of the sector may create more disruptions rather than enhance the learner experience (QAA, 2014; McKie, 2019). With focus on the reasons for closure of London branch campuses and the potential impact of Covid-19 on the remaining campuses activities, this paper presents an analysis of the sustainability of UK HEIs business strategies in response to the continuous commodification of the sector.
Use of food accessibility research for Covid-19 emergency response in Kampala, Uganda

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Abstract

The rapidly urbanizing city of Kampala (Uganda) has suffered food accessibility issues during the Covid19 lockdown crisis in 2020. We will show the research results of a rapid response brief which was shared in April 2020 with the Covid-19 task force of the Kampala Capital City Authority. Our analysis shows how the dimensions of food access (physical, social and economic) relate to the food insecurity and dietary diversity of different socioeconomic groups in Kampala. To quantify food consumption, we use the Food Insecurity Experience Scale and Household Dietary Diversity Score. We geographically map the formal food system potential to measure the physical accessibility of various socioeconomic groups. The results demonstrate that more established urban inhabitants experience different access vulnerabilities than newly migrated residents, depending on their income. Therefore, in order to evolve to more food secure cities, a better understanding of the dimensions of food accessibility is necessary. Such knowledge can support stakeholders in the urban food system in their long-term policy making, but also in their shortterm response to sudden shocks. This presentation will outline how the Covid-19 rapid response brief was disseminated and used by various stakeholders in Kampala’s food system as a basis for emergency food distribution.
Food Policy in the South of the City of Mexico

Itzé Magdalena Roque Escartín
Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM) Azcap, Mexico

Abstract

Based on the analysis of inequalities in the urban food system in some rural municipalities in the southern area of Mexico City (CDMX), such as Tlalpan, Xochimilco, Milpa Alta and Magdalena Contreras, producers of fruits, vegetables, and corn, interruptions in the linkages of the alimentary circuit are identified. In the face of urban growth and the transformations of a globalized city, challenges, such as inequity in the distribution of economic and geographical resources, are growing, facts that give rise to self-sufficiency and food security at the local (municipal) level. It has been possible to verify the potential of the rural areas studied, so that the food produced, at least, benefits the local population, by promoting agroecological and sustainable methods, such as the milpa system, organic agriculture and the technique of chinampas, procedures replicable worldwide, which also allow the renewal of the biological cycles of the land and water, providing healthy and nutritious food to the populations of the region. The design of a comprehensive public food policy linked to social programs is proposed, which makes it possible to reconnect the links of the local food system, which includes production, trade and distribution.
Selective globalisation: the geographies and transnational connections of Chinese-foreign cooperation in higher education

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Abstract

Over the past 30 years, China has become a major player in international higher education with a growing number of students studying overseas and a parallel influx of the offshore operations of foreign universities. However, structural analysis of the temporal-spatial evolution of Chinese-foreign cooperation in higher education is still rather thin on the ground. Drawing on a unique database which contains the information of all Chinese-foreign joint education programmes since the mid-1990s, in this paper we will explore the geographical patterns and transnational connections of Chinese-foreign cooperation in higher education in a historical perspective. Central to our analysis are the questions of 1) which cities are the key nodes that link China with the archipelago of international higher education, 2) which countries and cities have played a leading role in the internationalisation of China's higher education, and 3) what are the major intellectual/professional orientations of Chinese-foreign cooperation programmes in higher education? Our study reveals a selective pattern of globalisation in China’s international cooperation in higher education, which is not only shaped by the market considerations of higher education institutions, but also reflects the special internationalisation strategies of the Chinese state in higher education.
Constructing Antimicrobial Stewardship Culture: Good farming Identity, Disease Prevention and Biosecurity Practices in the UK pig farming industry

Kin Wing (Ray) Chan\textsuperscript{1}, Steven Hinchliffe\textsuperscript{1}, Alison Bard\textsuperscript{2}, Kristen Reyher\textsuperscript{3}, Ann Bruce\textsuperscript{4}, Henry Buller\textsuperscript{1}

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Abstract

Despite the recent expansion of rapid testing technologies (RDTs) in human medicine and espoused benefits of RDTs on more responsible antimicrobial use (AMU), there is relatively little work on the use of RDTs in farming. This paper focuses on the UK pig sector and explores the application of RDTs as a means of improving diagnostic pathways and reducing unnecessary treatment, especially in relation to AMU. By analysing policy documents from the UK government and NGOs on antimicrobial resistance, and drawing data from pig farmer (n=10) and veterinarians (n=10) interview transcripts, this paper argues that the promotion of RDTs may not be sufficient to enable pig farmers to adjust their treatment behaviours and reduce AMU; rather, it is necessary to examine and understand how good farming identities, value-chain structures, and assurance schemes co-produce an ‘antimicrobial stewardship culture’ which augments pig farmers’ consideration of disease prevention practices (e.g. cleansing, disinfection and vaccination) and attention to responsible AMU in pig production. This knowledge of how heterogenous assemblages of materials, human-microbial relations and the good farming identity construct approaches to AMU and stewardship in pig farming allows meaningful recommendations to be made regarding supporting and enhancing farmers in their approaches to responsible AMU.
Microplastic materialities: situating practices of valuation and care in the laboratory

Ryan Shum
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Microplastics are particular materialisations of plastic waste that are seemingly beyond (re)use and reconciliation. Formed from the breakup of once-familiar plastic objects, many of which are essential to the functioning of social life, their microscopic size and ubiquity seriously trouble practices of valuation and care in (and beyond) the plastic lifecycle. Not only do microplastics render ‘downstream’ forms of waste management ineffective; practices of recycling, repair and reuse that are foundational to the enactment of responsibility in the much-lauded circular economy are unable to recirculate these indeterminate and harmful materialities.

This talk empirically situated in sites of scientific activity examines how scientists develop novel ways of knowing and doing able to contend with the materiality of microplastics. Drawing on semi-structured interviews and field encounters, I explore how research scientists in the UK working from different disciplinary backgrounds learn to value and care for microplastics. I focus in particular on the experimental practices used by scientists to investigate the ostensibly simple question of where microplastics are. By following microplastics into the laboratory, I demonstrate that the question of where microplastics are cannot be separated from the ontological challenge of determining what counts as plastic and what does not. I contend that these laboratory techniques do not simply reveal the existence of microplastics ‘out there’ but are experimental arrangements of practices, spaces and materialities that enable some samples to be enacted as plastic and others devalued as contamination. Engaging with the diverse ways in which scientists learn to respond to microplastic materialities offer opportunities to consider the situated practices of valuation and care (and its limitations) in the unlikely space of the laboratory.
All handloom weavers were men. I think NOT! Autoethnographic revelations whilst exploring my matrilineal line

Tracy Ann Hayes
University of Cumbria, UK

Abstract

I see the display above the handloom, declaring ‘all handloom weavers were men’. I return to the reception desk and ask, who can I talk to about the sign? How can they ALL have been men? Looms were at the centre of the home, providing a more regular source of income, vital when farming yields were low, or building work scarce. When men were unwell, or working outside of the home, farming, bricklaying, quarrying, selling their wares, spending hard-won pennies in local inns, who did the work? Who made sure the family got fed? One ancestor was recorded as a weaver... perhaps in a mill, rather than at home? The receptionist directs me to an enthusiastic volunteer, who agrees that of course women were weavers too, they had to be, it was a family effort. It’s just that their names/roles were not recorded in the census, other than as unpaid domestic workers...

Fast-forward several generations, I watch as my granddaughter bakes cakes with her mother/my daughter. I witness the challenges of juggling roles of mother, wife, worker, postgraduate student. I wonder, what will the world be like for my granddaughter, when she’s grown up. Will we finally #BreakTheBias?

This autoethnographic presentation will draw on minor theory (Katz, 1996) in a way that embraces a minor mode of exploring, grounded in an intimate geography (Wolfe, 2020). I recognise “thinking in a minor key opens many spaces of betweenness from which to imagine, act, and live things differently” and acknowledge the blurry boundaries between fieldwork and everyday life.

An unbroken matrilineal line, a narrative thread... 10 generations of women, 1750-2022, lives determined by their/our relationships as daughters, wives, mothers, grandmothers. What do their/our stories reveal about my life here and now... and the generations that follow?
Decoding the links between neighborhood perceptions, mobility, and urban life satisfaction in poor areas in Global South cities

Luis A. Guzman\(^1\), Daniel Oviedo\(^2\), Daniela Castaño\(^1\), Julian Arellana\(^3\), Olga L. Sarmiento\(^1\)

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Abstract

This paper contributes to filling the urban life satisfaction gap by addressing two questions using a peripheral and poor community in Bogotá (Colombia) as a case study. First, how life satisfaction relates to mobility measures, neighborhood perceptions, and social capital. Second, how transport-driven urban transformations such as a recent cable car system (TransMiCable) influence perceived and measurable mobility effects on life satisfaction. Building on current literature, we propose six hypotheses to understand such relationships before and after TransMiCable implementation. We defined seven latent variables (i.e., life satisfaction, neighborhood and transport satisfaction, security, infrastructure, interpersonal trust, and institutional trust) and three objective measures (leisure activity participation, work travel time, and transport affordability). We tested the hypotheses using a multiple-cause multiple-indicator modeling approach, which allowed us to identify how an intervention such as TransMiCable impacts urban life satisfaction. Results showed that the principal determinant of life satisfaction was leisure activity participation. Transport and neighborhood satisfaction were also important determinants of life satisfaction. The effects of security, infrastructure, and institutional and interpersonal trust had indirect, positive, and statistically significant effects on life satisfaction. Travel time and transport affordability had negative but significant effects on it. Positive changes in the satisfaction regarding the experience in the transport system and the perception of neighborhood characteristics can trigger significant improvements in life satisfaction and quality of life in poor communities in the Global South. Our findings also suggest that the impact evaluation associated with comprehensive urban transformations caused by the implementation of new transport systems should consider individual perceptions in addition to objective mobility measures.
How do they get there? Comparing the assemblages of Indian international students in ‘community’ and ‘career’ colleges in Toronto and Sudbury, Canada

Sutama Ghosh, Raymond M. Garrison
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Abstract

In 2020, international students contributed over $21 billion CDN to the Canadian economy, through the payment of international tuition fees, living costs, and labour contributions (IRCC, 2020). In the same year, due to increase in federal targets, more than 500,000 international students entered Canada, and among those, Indians were the most numerous in all post-secondary institutions (PSIs) in Ontario (CBIE, 2021). In Ontario, Indian international students attend PSIs in ethno-culturally diverse immigrant gateway-cities like Toronto, as well as in relatively homogenous, third tier cities like Sudbury (Statistics Canada, 2021). Rather than attending universities however, increasingly, Indian international students are being admitted to diploma conferring colleges, which include government-funded ‘community’ and privately operated ‘career’ colleges (CBIE, 2021). In addition to their sources of funding, community and career colleges also differ with respect to their admission requirements and international tuition fees, which affect their abilities to attract international students. Despite such growing importance of Indian international students attending colleges in Ontario’s geographically diverse contexts, ‘how do they get to be there’ has been little explored. This qualitative research reports on the reasons and processes of migration of forty-six Indian international students attending community and career colleges in Toronto (n=30) and Sudbury (n=16). The paper analyses the involvements of various local and transnational economic and social actors at macro, meso, and micro scales, and maps their positions and interconnections within the higher education ‘system’ at large. Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) Assemblage Theory is used to explain the ‘arrangement’.
Assessing residential mobility and gentrification among the poor in Global South low-income urban areas

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Abstract

Comprehensive public transport projects should be improved accessibility, the built environment, and the quality of life. However, these interventions also generate negative externalities on the social and economic dynamics around the project’s influence zone, including gentrification processes. In the context of a poor and peripheral urban area in Bogotá (Colombia) characterized by low accessibility, and social vulnerability, a broad urban improvement program that included quality public transport and public space, facilities for recreation and cultural activities, markets, and a civil service office, could be causing a displacement of the poorest towards more remote areas, of lower urban quality and even worse accessibility. Gentrification might be defined as the displacement of urban populations, usually replaced by wealthier segments, due to higher land values or changing land uses, generated by diverse causes such as better accessibility and built environment renewal. Here, we found a new type of gentrification: displacement of the poorest by the poor. This phenomenon among the poor gradually may be a new frontier of the informal-formal urban relations in Latin America. Considering this, this research aims to evaluate residential mobility processes generated by the implementation of a new cable car, implemented in Bogotá. The analysis is based on the estimation of hybrid discrete choice models, calibrated from a longitudinal survey including a stated preferences experiment. The formulation allows estimating the resident’s probability of moving houses considering the effects of perceptions and observed attributes, as well as accounting for the data’s panel structure. Results suggest that the respondent’s willingness to move from the cable car’s catchment area is low, but it increases when lower-priced housing is available. Also, willingness to move is higher if the individual has housing alternatives that have a police station nearby and other transport alternatives.
Mapping Biosecurity Practices: Disease Emergence and Farming Scripts in the Pig Farming Industry in Hong Kong

Kin Wing (Ray) Chan
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Abstract

Despite the growing scholarly attention of using the concept of ‘emergency’ and ‘risk’ in biosecurity and food studies, there is relatively little work on developing farmer-oriented approaches to explore how farmers understand the emergence of disease outbreaks and biosecurity risks in their farms. This paper explores the potential of using “farmers’ mapping” technique to understand pig farmers’ perceptions of disease emergency and biosecurity risks, focusing on the drivers of biosecurity decisions and daily disease management practices in Hong Kong. This paper argues that governmentally enforced biosecurity regulations and imposed Codes of Practices (COPs) may not be an effective governing tool to curtail the emergence of animal disease outbreaks. Rather, it is necessary to develop more farmer-oriented approaches to help farmers think about how better spatial arrangement and social-cultural relationships are supporting and enhancing farmers in their approaches to farm biosecurity. This paper shows how the “farmers’ mapping” approach enables farmers to think about good farming values and social-cultural relationship, which allows meaningful reflections to be made to support farmers in reducing the risks of disease emergence.
From “No” to “Know”: A heuristic for knowledge production as identity work

Joanna Kocsis
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Abstract

How people know themselves and how they are known by others determines how they are treated in society, how they are intervened upon through policy, and how they understand their own agency and entitlements. Projects of oppression such as colonialism, racism, misogyny, and heteronormativity, to name a few, rely on the creation of knowledge about certain groups of people by other groups of people, with the objective of justifying the subordination or domination of the former by the latter. When knowledge made for this purpose informs the identity work of groups facing oppression, their most intimate and important form of knowledge, self-knowledge, can be compromised and their ability to resist or contest oppression may be restricted.

As geography scholars, we have the moral duty to interrogate the ways in which we make knowledge and how that knowledge impacts people’s lives. Mignolo (2009) calls for the decolonization of knowledge creation through epistemic disobedience, breaking the First World monopoly on knowledge creation. Following feminist, Indigenous, and post-structural scholars, I explore how knowledge is emergent, not always visible, and negotiated amongst members of a community. The production of knowledge looks different in different communities, but too often researchers trained within the Western paradigm of positivist research attempt to force knowledge production with communities from non-dominant cultures to fit the rationalist, text-based mould of positivism.

This paper offers a heuristic distinguishing knowledge as social, created, performed and resistant that aims to support the development of research activities with groups that have been historically left out of the positivist project of knowledge production. It draws on a case study that explored the identity work and meaning-making of a group of racially- and territorially-stigmatized young people living in rapidly-gentrifying Old Havana, Cuba to better the experiences of a group conventionally considered “at-risk”.
Learning for Revolution: non-formal education and training, Grenada 1979-1983

Jacob Fairless Nicholson
UCL, UK

Abstract

In March 1979, Maurice Bishop’s New Jewel Movement formed the People’s Revolutionary Government (PRG) of Grenada after a bloodless coup that ousted former Prime Minister Eric Gairy and brought to an end what Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and Chris Searle (a British anti-racist educator that worked closely with the leaders of the revolution) described as a form of ‘European mimicry’. Despite Grenada’s size, the revolution and it’s forestalling under Reagan was felt far beyond the Windward Isles of the Caribbean and signaled the end of what Vijay Prashad has called the Third World Project, at the heart of which lay the decades-long, global and multi-centred political project of Black Power. Despite reawakening a long history of anti-colonial struggle on the island, initiating reforms to education, healthcare and employment, and launching new forms of democratic participation and civic engagement, important stories from the revolution – including those of its radical education provision including the Center for Popular Education and National In-Service Teacher Education Programme – remain critically overlooked by geographers (although see Fairless Nicholson 2020). Drawing on the recent accession of new, uncatalogued archival material deposited by Chris Searle and dedicated to Jacqueline Creft (Minister for Education in Grenada 1980-1983) at one of London’s prominent Black archives, the Black Cultural Archives (BCA), this research paper presents a critical historical geography of education provision during the revolution for the first time. The paper has two main objectives. First, drawing on grey literature, photographs, public addresses, and other material published in Grenada during the revolution, it outlines how public and popular education practice and training was represented in official publications. Second, reflecting on the role of Chris Searle and Brazilian educator Paolo Freire, the paper examines the internationalist dimensions of education and training provision during the revolution.
Do humans dream of electric meat? Observations and problematics.

Patrick Weir
Technische Universität Dresden, Germany

Abstract

In recent years, the rising standard of living in the Global North, combined with a growing awareness of industrial animal agriculture’s abuse of animals and the environment has had a profound impact on food geographies. Specifically culminating in a push towards meat alternatives including “plant based” or vegan options and artificial meat. This paper takes as its focus the newest addition to a growing list of competitors in the emerging ‘protein’ market: artificial or so-called “lab grown” meats, which seek to transcend both meat and meat alternatives. These are intended to provide a choice to consumers who for various reasons, remain attached at a conceptual and experiential level to meat consumption and for whom plant based alternatives will remain unlikely to find uptake. The scalability and viable mass consumption of such products will be explored using the lens of speculative and science fiction texts on “post-meat” futures This paper takes the world-building force of “post-meat” protein imaginaries as satires on contemporary consumption habits, or as devices to point towards possible utopian or dystopian futures. Through these texts I point to three issues which repeatedly arise in both fictional and “real” spaces of cultured meat products: 1) The issue of energy transfer 2) The problem of scaling production and 3) The “naturalness” paradox. Whilst these points of consideration are all broadly sceptical, I argue that they still have a part to play in the transition to sustainable, “post-meat” futures.
THE POLITICS OF THE RURAL AND RELATIONAL VALUES: CONTESTED
DISCOURSES OF RURAL CHANGE AND LANDSCAPE FUTURES IN WEST WALES.

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Abstract

Across Europe, rural landscapes and communities are changing, following local, national and global pressures. The future physical makeup of these landscapes, the species, landforms and land uses that are present, and the relationship between these landscapes and local communities, is uncertain. At the same time, rural politics has moved from debates about agricultural production to broader considerations of ways of life, and who and what is appropriate in the countryside. As different visions for the physical makeup of landscapes are being proposed and negotiated, it is worth understanding how they fit into broader rural politics, and the values that underpin them, particularly relational landscape values. The purpose of this work is to understand contests over the future of landscapes in west Wales, with particular focus on the relational values that underpin different visions for the landscape. We use image based Q methodology to analyse different visions. We find two distinct visions which we name socio-ecological transformation and maintaining heritage farming landscapes. We find that relational and eudemonic values underpin these visions. Despite claims by participants and stakeholders to speak for rural communities, we find important difference within rural communities. We find that disagreements on the environmental and social future of the landscape are based on shared facts but divergent values. These findings have important implications for the future of contested projects aimed at transforming the landscape of this region, and relevance for wider European landscape change. Our conceptual approach, which combines a focus on the politics of the rural with relational values, and our methodological approach, of image based Q methodology, have great potential for understanding debates over the future of rural landscapes.
Avoiding the risk of deepening inequalities in the food production chain: an initial framework for higher education regarding alternative proteins

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Abstract

Although the benefits of alternative proteins are clear, the transition to the new production model may bring numerous challenges for meat and grain-producing countries, especially those in the global south. One of the challenges is the high degree of technological sophistication of the new chain, which may require workers with higher qualifications. Globally, there are initiatives for inserting cellular animal science content into higher education, with actions related to new courses and new programs. Considering this context, we aim to provide an initial framework for the adaptation of Brazilian higher education, so that the curricula for professions involved with conventional animal production incorporate relevant knowledge for successful engagement with cellular animal science and plant-based production systems. Initial results show that the current Brazilian curriculum guidelines for veterinary and animal science programs include courses which may accommodate information envisioning cellular animal science. Additionally, the offering of an independent cellular animal science course may contribute to the basic education and skills for animal scientists and veterinarians to engage with alternative proteins. Students’ interest in cellular animal science teaching in Brazil has been high. Education on cellular animal science will likely decrease resistance, accelerate the transition, allowing for higher levels of engagement in Brazil and thus decreasing the risk of exacerbating geographical inequalities. Thus, for countries with strong conventional meat production, improvements in specific curricula may be strategic to counter the risk of novel inequalities arising from alternative protein chains.

Acknowledgements

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What doing the writing does

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Abstract

Being a full-time support to someone with progressive memory loss means my life forms around accommodation to slippages in memory. Writing my nightly diary enables me to confront and (to an extent) reconcile myself with my day-to-day reality. More than three years into that diaristic commitment, that writing is becoming a highly conscious means for me to notice change and, in turn, mediate my response. Such change can be practically easy to cope with but highly destabilising: my deep sadness when my mother finally forgot how to fix up their hair, forgot how to casually draw back the strands, swirl them into a bun. Other change – such as their fading control over bladder and bowels – require rigorous routines and kit (pants and pads) but feels less tragic.

In this paper, I grapple with my physical and psychic entanglement in that writing and question what doing the writing does. The act of writing may facilitate a rationalisation of feeling but there are ethical implications of distributing that writing, of making someone a subject, of being a subject. Importantly, academics who write regularly are no less entangled. Texts take on their own character that can attach or project onto the person of the author: some texts are light and leave little trace; others engorge. Texts are currency, the list of publications, sometimes coalescing into an oeuvre, come to represent the author. This is my attempt to get to grips with what writing is doing to and for me as a support to another person, and what it does to me, to us, as academics.
“They are Cringey and ‘Poklen’ on TikTok”: Cultural Cringe, Cringe Culture and Class Consciousness in Brunei.

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Abstract

This paper examines the rise of class consciousness amongst the young people facilitated by the circulation, exchanges, and (re)production of popular culture contents. Drawing from the concept of Cultural Cringe (Philips, 1958), I frame the cringe culture observed in Brunei as a setting for the young people’s growing consciousness of class differences. This examination is based on the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) on TikTok, personal communication, and online discussion with the young Bruneians on Brunei-based TikTok content. These young people’s consumption and engagements with TikTok content reveal the intersection of religion, identity, and class consciousness in their everyday lives. Their Malay Muslim identity, intra-generational expectations, differences, and the nation-constructed ideas of the young Bruneian Muslim frame their reaction to the accepted (mainstream) and the less- or non-accepted (cringe) content. ‘Poklen,’ a derogatory local term used to label a non-mainstream group of young people in the country, is appropriated to indicate embarrassing and non-conforming content. Despite not intending to create a new class formation, the young people’s responses via the label cringey and ‘Poklen’ exemplify the rising awareness of the different groups of content creators. They are creating a class division based on popular culture production and consumption; Us and the Poklen. A class division separate from the existing class categorisation based on socio-economic status, education, and race. Analysing the cringe culture and young people’s everyday responses to Bruneians’ TikTok content is significant in understanding contemporary youth culture and their lived experiences, particularly their adaptation, contestation, and negotiation of global popular culture unique to their contexts.
Socio-demographics aspects of Twitter Covid misinformation across countries

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Abstract

This study aims at better understanding of COVID19 misinformation flow in social media exploiting the geographical component. We collected a Twitter corpus of 350k messages by means of monitoring specific hashtags and some relevant accounts. In addition, we designed automatic classifiers for detecting the likelihood of misinformation and the topic of the message. We also predicted some sociodemographic features of the user accounts, such as age, gender, and political affiliation. Our analysis shows strong associations of demographics with the spreading of false information, e.g. users identified as old far-right wing males tend to spread more false information. Additionally, we found differences between countries and global regions. For instance, women from rich global north countries tend to spread more fake news (19%) than their counterparts in poor global south countries (12%). Far-right misinformation spreaders also show a tendency to concentrate in Global North countries (22% North vs 17% South). Finally, in all the age groups the Global North has a higher share in misinformation spreaders than the Global South, with the exception of 34 to 45 years old, in which the Global South is ahead by a good 7% (22% North vs 29% South).
Insecure Steps: Atmospheres of Fear in Everyday Urban Walking

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Abstract

Urban walking practices are often described in homogenous ways and categorized regarding their purpose or the kind of rhythm or attention that shape a pedestrian journey. No doubt there is a value in distinguishing different sorts of walking; however, if we look closely at everyday pedestrian experiences, we discover that even the same walk can be many sorts of walks: it may have different purposes or engage in different rhythms, forms of attention, and feelings. One key feeling that may shape the experience of walking is that of threat or insecurity. Based on an ethnographic exploration of everyday walkers’ experiences who lived in two different cities in Chile, I use the notion of atmospheres to explore how the affectivities of fear and insecurity work upon everyday walking experiences. One main finding I show is the relevance of materials configurations and infrastructures in walkers’ senses of insecurity, especially among women. I finish by remarking that the notion of atmospheres is useful to capture the relational aspects of pedestrian practices and to make visible their deep and subtle, yet relevant, lived experiences.
Young People at a Crossroads: Connecting stories of climate change across places and generations

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Abstract

This paper reports on a participatory research project conducted with 20 young people aged 14-18 in Manchester and Melbourne, two highly diverse cities with high rates of historical and actual international migration. Young people with a recent family migration history were invited to join the project as young researchers and were interviewed in small groups about their experiences of learning and talking about climate change in school, in extra-curricular spaces and at home. Young researchers were then trained to interview their parents, some of whom were born in different countries to the young researchers, some of whom had migrated with their children in recent years. The interviews were wide-ranging but often focused on parents’ stories of everyday and exceptional environmental hazards in the different places they grew up (predominantly countries in Africa and South Asia).

In this paper, we look at how young people anticipated, prompted for and responded to stories of climate change and environmental insecurity in their interviews with parents, and consider this alongside young researchers’ earlier articulations of their own experiences of (the limitations of) climate change education. In making this consideration, we focus on young researchers’ expressed desire to learn about climate change in ways that foreground stories of everyday life in different contexts to replace or add context to global climate change statistics. We will briefly reflect on the potential for storytelling to build solidarity across difference in the face of climate change.
Urban mobilities and fear: women's experiences of public space in Dublin.

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Abstract

Public space has been envisaged as being a crucial platform for urbanites to be able to recuperate and engage in socially and physically restorative activities in the face of COVID-19 restrictions. In Ireland these restrictions saw many people significantly limit their social interactions and brought a challenging and increased focus on the home space as being the center point for both work and life. However, despite the importance of public space as an outlet for activities such as exercise and as a platform to interact passively and actively with wider society in the face of a pandemic, the experience of some women saw their mobilities/interactions permeated with fear. Rather than public space being a purely restorative space it was/continued to be a problematic space. The paper presents research conducted with participants in Dublin, Ireland. It highlights the need to remain aware of the challenges women face in their everyday urban public space mobilities, the primary sources of fear and spatial usage inequality.
“Too smart”: Infrastructuring the internet through regional and rural smart policy in Australia

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Abstract

Smart infrastructure is positioned as central to the liveability and viability of rural and regional towns in Australia. The Australian Government’s Smart Cities Plan and Regional Connectivity Program includes Smart Investment in regional areas and the New South Wales Government has prioritised connectivity and telecommunications infrastructural development through the Regional Digital Connectivity program. And yet regional and rural communities are typically excluded from the evidence base for smart technologies and services. Local Aboriginal Land Councils are also important stakeholders in managing the digital processes associated with information and infrastructure moving across different Countries. This paper draws on data from the ‘It just works!’: Regional and rural consumer understandings of smart technologies in North West New South Wales project (Randell-Moon & Hynes, 2021), including over 130 survey responses and interviews with shire councillors, land councillors, and consumers on smart development and internet infrastructure in the region. In the areas surveyed, smart regional policy is variously emerging, non-existent, or assembled from existing policy domains and regulation involving the internet, telecommunications, regional development, First Nations, and local government. We argue that regional and rural understandings of growth and development are experienced through the infrastructuring processes of internet quality, availability, and speed.
Mobilising around the Right to Food in South Africa: How has Covid-19 shifted the civil society landscape in South Africa?

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Abstract

Even before the Covid crisis, South Africa was experiencing a food crisis with one quarter of households experiencing food insecurity. This was deepened and made more visceral by the Covid-19 lockdown when over three million jobs were lost, school feeding programmes stopped and (initially at least) informal food traders were closed down. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) reacted swiftly by collectively shifting their focus to emergency food relief. This was not only a tremendous human response to a desperate situation, but is also a potentially significant opportunity for improved food governance. CSOs based in communities in particular are ideally placed to help better connect food insecure South Africans to decision making about the food system. However, CSOs are often conspicuously absent in policy discussions and strategic planning about food security in South Africa, despite the Right to Food being enshrined in the constitution. Through over 50 elite interviews, documentary analysis of over 100 media articles and participant observation in regular NGO-government meetings in 2020 and 2021, this paper explores how lock-down changed the CSO landscape around food governance in one province of South Africa, the Western Cape. It identifies the challenges and opportunities for community kitchens, urban gardens and other on the ground food initiatives to become ‘sites of struggle’ where the narratives on the food system can be debated and contested in bottom up ‘mobilising environments’. The paper argues that these short term solutions to the food crisis need to connect with the top down ‘authorising environment’ of the State in order to bring about long-term change of the food system if the Right to Food is to be realised.

Civil
Spiral Movement: Writing with Fascism and Violence in the City

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Abstract

How can we write socio-spatial relations in cities at a time when the extreme right is on the rise and authoritarian leaders appear to be unstoppable in many countries around the world? Antifascists’ interest in the built environment is often limited to the collection of address data of right-wing extremists in order to be able to locate their enemies. In this paper, on the other hand, I write with fascism and violence through vignettes or urban situatedness and materiality. I develop an eclectic approach, engaging with diverse theories of violence and establishing loose connections between classical urban sociology and fascist urbanization, liberalism in practice and historical fascism, and material aesthetics and authoritarian space-time. In so doing, I highlight endemic forms of state and capitalist violence through spatial manifestations of ghettoisation, beautification, and overcoding. I write from the standpoint of egalitarian politics and acknowledge the limits of factual knowledge and liberal appeals to truth in breaking through fascist worldviews of domination. The architecture of the text is constructed through a circular infrastructure that connects a ‘they’ (Twitter users), with an ‘I’ (author), with a ‘you’ (Benjamin), with a numerous and relational ‘we’ in the city. Rather than developing a linear argument that confronts and tries to persuade fascists, I explore writing as a collective political practice that refutes totalizing accounts with the aim to open meaning-makings through returning to and reworking numerous views. Responding to a spiral of violence, I investigate a spiral urban movement that is organized around a shared commitment to an anti-oppressive, non-hierarchical world; a movement that does not spiral towards annihilation but towards liberation.
Encountering coastal youth citizenship: exploring young people’s classed engagements with coastal environments in the UK

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Abstract

This paper asks if and how social class affects the ways that young people engage with, and care for, coastal and marine environments. Interest in marine and coastal environmental impacts is growing and while young people are noted as central actors in these debates, little is documented about which youth voices are enabled or privileged in engaging with, and caring for, marine spaces and how social class dis/advantages different forms of coastal youth citizenship. This matters when set against declining coastal youth populations and increased instances of social polarisation between and within coastal communities that results in many young people struggling to envisage futures lived by the sea. Using a novel digital ethnography technique, this paper examines how and why young people’s everyday engagements and encounters with coastal and marine environments meaningfully shapes their understandings of environmental and social care. In examining the intersections of social class, youth citizenship, coastal literacy and the geographies of encounter, the paper develops new understandings of how young people interpret and approach coastal management, education and engagement, in ways that produce individual/collective interest, responsibility and care for marine spaces. Moreover, this approach advances discourses of young people as citizens ‘in becoming’ by examining how young people’s active engagement with, and management/promotion of, coastal environmental care is articulated through their ‘everyday agency’. This matters in terms of social class in ensuring a broader range of young people’s voices are able to shape decisions made at the local and national level.
Unpacking methodological and ethical factors impacting access to participation in international research with young co-researchers during COVID-19

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Abstract

Methodological and ethical considerations are being revisited in participatory research with young people as projects migrate online or use hybrid approaches in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Adaptations have, at times, posed limitations, as local challenges in Majority World countries intersect with stringent institutional ethical requirements in Minority World countries. In this paper, we draw on our experiences with young people aged 15 to 26 years in a project on youth livelihoods in inclusive cities. Young people were involved in advisory and co-researcher capacities, and played a vital role advising the project team, conducting research projects, and developing engagement and advocacy strategies. The project was planned prior to, but started during, the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore required methodological adjustments.

We first consider social, geographical and economic factors mediating access to online participation. Internet infrastructure and support services are not universally accessible, and young people face differing responsibilities and pressures with the pandemic. Unpacking the climates that determine access is critically important as we consider how participatory processes can be made more inclusive in this ‘new normal’. Second, we consider the dissonance between institutional ethics requirements and community-based research practices, which has been amplified by the pandemic conditions. Additional limitations are posed to participation with institutional requirements sometimes at odds with community-based research practices and everyday activities of local people. We argue there is an urgent need to build on the expertise of local civic society organisations in ethical research, to ensure inclusive and dynamic participatory processes.
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2020-vision - hybrid and digital futures for engaging youth in participatory research addressing the global challenges

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Abstract

March 2020, days prior to global lockdowns resulting from Covid-19, we received news that our international research collaboration had been funded. The project planned to utilise co-production and youth-led participatory action research focused on climate change and injustice in Vietnam. It was intended to be delivered in-person and hinged on building trusting relationships with youth researchers and ‘marginalised’ communities; its aim, to explore diverse and indigenous knowledges focused on climate change-related hydrological extremities through intergenerational and intercultural exchanges. What followed was a significant disruption to normal ways of working and the need to innovate and explore new digital/hybrid approaches. Thus through a process of reflexive trial and error, and opportunities afforded by additional funding, we have explored how we could adapt existing methodologies and develop new digital approaches for hybrid participatory research, connecting international researcher teams both together and with diverse international youth participants. In this presentation we examine this journey focusing not only on the pitfalls and challenges but also on the opportunities and successes. We include the opportunity to engage a wider range of global youth voices (through digitally-facilitated international youth advisory boards) and extending the visual documentation of research. We explore lessons learnt and how this can inform the future direction of hybrid working and moves to more wholly digital approaches – especially important for international research in the context of the climate crisis and the academy’s responsibility to find innovative ways of working that do not exacerbate the very issues we are seeking to mitigate.
Regions in recovery? The significance of festivals for regenerating and reimagining regional community life

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Abstract
Regions in recovery? The significance of festivals for regenerating and reimagining regional community life

COVID-19 and the recent period of natural disasters in Australia have severely impacted the livelihoods of practitioners in arts and culture, stakeholders, and those employed in associated industries, and demonstrated how deeply intertwined arts, culture and economies are. Lockdowns and social distancing have meant radical changes to everyday life, and this has placed the creative industries under immense economic pressure. Nevertheless, these circumstances have brought opportunities for adaptation and new creative opportunities, especially in the use of virtual and online platforms. However, while online platforms have opened up arts and culture practitioners, performers and festivals to new audiences and new ways of creating, restrictions such as physical distancing have meant decreased movement within and between places, which has led to the cancellation of public gatherings. This in turn has meant not only decreased social interaction but also significant decrease in spending associated with travel, meals, accommodation and other discretionary spending, as well as the uncertainty around insurance cover if a festival is cancelled.

These challenges raise questions about the future of regional arts festivals at least until an effective vaccine that covers Covid variants has been administered to a significant portion of the population. Will festivals become more exclusive, or will they need to be small-scale, more localised events? Yet alongside this, the capacity for recovery, resilience and transformation inherent in public events like festivals, will be more important than ever for regional places and communities. This paper explores the impact of significant change in regional places and the possible role and effectiveness of festivals in rethinking and reimagining regional community life in a precarious post-Covid, climate changing world.
What does action look like in virtual spaces? Migrant Latinas engaging virtual action research from spaces in-between

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Abstract

This paper presents a detailed account of reflections, tensions, and opportunities created from conducting a virtual participatory action research project called ‘PARqueologia Migrante’ (parqueologiamigrante.com) with five Latin American migrant teens in Baltimore. For eight months, the young women used their testimonios, conversations, and interviews from four community activists to learn more about the city and find potential options to improve resources for young migrant women. Following Cahill (2007), this paper contributes to the field of action research in how it learns from ‘imperfect’ accounts, highlighting ‘reflexive accounts of practices evaluating what works and what does not’ in action research (p.299) especially when collaborating with youth in virtual spaces. Some relevant themes include the role of the facilitator, first virtual encounters, how the virtual spaces affect the research process, ways in which the home space blends with the virtual space during the project, and what action looks like in the virtual spaces when disseminating results. Connecting these themes, I discuss the importance of strong and already well-established relationships in the community to develop action research in virtual spaces.
Research exploring causes of school refusal among young people on the autism spectrum in mainstream education is dominated by the voices of parents and professionals. The short and long-term impact of this phenomena (which can be understood as form of exclusion through inclusion), is felt most keenly by those experiencing it, and therefore research should endeavour to include the voices of young people on the autism spectrum. This creates a series of ethical and practical barriers to be overcome which includes the need for a positive, trusting relationship for the participant to discuss a potentially sensitive topic. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this was an obstacle which needed to be solved to complete an MA by Research. The solution was found in the development of a recorded parent-child conversation (where participants were in their own home – a safe, known space) using online conferencing software. Aside from suggested sentence starters, parents and their children were encouraged to engage in a discussion about the child’s school refusal, whilst the researcher remained online with their microphone and camera turned off. A communitarian approach enabled participants to construct and co-produce knowledge between themselves (through a codified language built on their historic relationship and their combined experiences of the subject matter) and through engagement with the researcher’s methodology. Consideration of the importance of power, trusting relationships, and the communication needs of participants facilitated a re-ordering of knowledge production, and a deepening of our understanding of school refusal behaviour – lifting young people’s voices in the process.
Tourism and gender research in hybrid words and in the Global-South: exploring scholars and interviewees emotions

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Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Mexico

Abstract

As scholars, we have to adapt ourselves to Covid consequences. This oral communication focuses on our experiences during a short-term impact research on resilience among women working on tourism. Our participants were women in vulnerable situations involved in the travel and tourism sector in Tijuana (Mexico). Our project lasted 6 months (June-November, 2021) and we had to produce some Open Educational Resources to make visible several gendered activities (such as child and family care) while struggling with economic impacts generated by Covid. We have conducted on-line interviews due to restrictions established by our university and this situation made us face some mixed emotions. The study of emotions has been limited explored from gender and tourism studies (Bakas, 2017; Buda et al., 2014; Jiménez-Esquinas, 2017; Tucker, 2009 & 2007); however, during the last years some scholars have paid attention to a range of emotions faced by women working on tourism. Particularly important has been the so-called “ambivalent fluxes” identified by Jiménez-Esquinas (2017) to propose critical gazes to intricate dynamics. By interviewing vulnerable women and by experiencing vulnerability ourselves, as scholars, we propose an exercise to apprehend our emotions and to promote participatory research that recognizes ambivalent fluxes between interviewees and interviewers. Our main conclusions will highlight a “continuum” in participatory research, as well as the recognition of multiple vulnerabilities experienced (career related, personal and domestic, local and global, among others) and their impacts in our research practices.
The potential and the reality of marine ecotourism

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Abstract

Tourism, especially ecotourism, is often considered the solution to environmentally degrading economic activities, from trophy hunting to poor fishing practices. However, such generalisations neglect a number of possible concerns including: (1) direct environmental concerns related to construction activities or pollution of the local area (2) cultural issues, such as erosion of traditional practices and professions (3) landscapes of seascapes not appropriate for tourism activities and (4) lack of capacity for tourism, including health and safety or language issues. Through coupled socio-economic and environmental predictive models based on case studies in Bali and mainland Ecuador we demonstrate how tourism can hinder conservation efforts if poorly applied, but can result in improved ecological and social outcomes if developed with appropriate consideration of culture, community needs and scale of developments.
Investigating efforts to extend cycle tourism infrastructure in and around the Aso Kuju National Park, Southwest Japan

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APU, Japan

Abstract

As other opportunities for everyday sport and leisure have faced restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic, cycle tourism has emerged strongly. Under lockdown conditions in the UK, for example, cycle use has proliferated both for commuting and touring (Weed, 2020). Policy-makers promote cycling to support wellbeing, sustainability and rural revitalization. However, Lamont and Buultjens (2011) noted numerous barriers to the development of independent cycle tourism in Australia including “road safety, inadequate infrastructure, and difficulties associated with the carriage of bicycles on transport services.” Among them, dedicated lanes to separate cyclists from motorized traffic are the most frequently cited priority of previous research. This study thus seeks to investigate impediments to increasing the length of cycle lanes in the context of Aso Kuju National Park in Southwest Japan. The largest national park in Kyushu covers an upland area of 727 km² that includes the Mount Aso caldera and Kuju mountains. Although better known for automobile touring, the rich range of volcanic landscapes, grasslands and mountainous marshes could certainly be conducive for cycle tourism. The tourism sector makes a significant contribution to the economy of such rural destinations that appeal to cyclists for their quieter roads, cleaner air and scenery (Ritchie, 1999). Japan’s national parks already attracted significant domestic visitation and increasing numbers of inbound cyclists prior to the pandemic. During COVID-19, strict immigration policies prevent foreign tourists from entering the country, and heavily restrict outbound Japanese travel so local visitation, “stay-cations” and micro-tourism (trips within a one-hour radius from home) have flourished due to the rise in domestic demand (Ito, 2021). Designated cycle lane networks do exist in some rural areas, notably the Shimanami Kaido that connects the main island of Honshu to Shikoku across the Seto Naikai (inland sea) National Park.

Cycle tourism is an integral part of the Japanese government’s plans to achieve local revitalization and place-based community development (Ito, 2021). However, to integrate cycle promotion within a holistic smart transport strategy for sustainable tourism “is not simply a matter of printing and distributing maps of cycling routes and erecting directional signage” (Lamont & Buultjens, 2011).
Challenging Climate Crisis: Transforming Climate Education through Co-productive Processes

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Abstract

At a time when eco-anxiety is becoming a defining characteristic of young people’s lives (see: Hickman et al., 2021), there is a critical need to prioritise meaningful climate conversations within education. The ‘Challenging the Climate Crisis: Children’s Agency to Tackle Policy Underpinned by Learning for Transformation’ (CCC-Catapult) project seeks to respond to this call. Specifically, building on the principles of co-production, the CCC-Catapult project brings together researchers and young people in Tampere (Finland), Bristol (UK), Galway (Ireland) and Genoa (Italy) to examine experiences of learning and agency during the climate emergency, with a view to developing transformative resources for progressive climate change education. As a project CCC-Catapult incorporates a multi-method approach including a survey of approximately 2,000 young people, focus groups, and visual creative methods such as storyboarding and deep mapping. Data for the project is predominantly, though not exclusively, collected through school settings. To ensure that the research is genuinely meaningful for young people, CCC-Catapult is collaborating directly with 15–18-year-olds in each project location; this process of co-production has been facilitated by and through the formation of Youth Action Partnerships (YAPs). To this end, our paper will focus on this co-productive process, exploring the value of such collaborative actions for deepening research insights within current conceptualisations of climate education. YAP members will be invited to reflect on their role in shaping the research process, sharing their stories and reflections within this presentation, either in-person or through recorded testimonials.
Community-based eco-prosumption behaviour in yoga tourism destination during pandemic (COVID-19)

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University of Otago, New Zealand

Abstract

This study examines mitigation efforts by yoga teachers in maintaining community-based social sustainability eco-prosumption behaviours during pandemic (COVID-19). Eco-prosumption is a “mode of modes of consuming, producing and gaining values in socially and environmentally responsible ways” (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017, p. 10). The concept of prosumption posits the inseparableness of production and consumption (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010). To bring equity in this prosumption, promotion of social sustainability suggests the community participation and wellbeing of the local community (Mohamed et al., 2021). However, the concept of eco-prosumption is comprehensive, and in this paper, we address community-based social sustainability. Eco-prosumption is one of the concepts (other are equity, safety, and urban forms) of the social sustainability framework (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017, p. 11). These are closely related concepts related to environmental sustainability (Pitarch-Garrido, 2018). Though Eizenberg and Jabareen (2017) have explained the theoretical premise of eco-prosumption, it is unclear how it is practised in the tourism praxis. Therefore, this study employs the eco-prosumption concept of social sustainability to expand and further understand the yoga tourism context in a semi-rural/town wellness destination Rishikesh, India.

This research involves interviewing yoga teachers by undertaking an interpretive research paradigm (often, yoga teachers are the owners and managers). Eleven online semi-structured interviews were conducted with yoga teachers from June 2021 to January 2022. Four themes were identified as most important for the eco-prosumption behaviour of yoga teachers in Rishikesh: Community engagement, Sustainable Togetherness, Rural development, & Social Work. All these mitigation efforts are co-produced by yoga travellers and yoga teachers. This study extends our understanding of the diverse impacts of yoga tourism on local communities’ social sustainability through engaging with the eco-prosumption component of social sustainability to explore the mitigation efforts of yoga tourism destination actors.
Intermediaries, shared agency and the dignity of expertise: Working with participatory peer researchers who are refugees in Jordan on a Covid-Response

Aya Musmar\textsuperscript{1}, Dorothea Kleine\textsuperscript{2}, Melissa Gatter\textsuperscript{2}, Najah Al-Shanableh\textsuperscript{3}, Anwar Kwaylih\textsuperscript{1}, Stephen Connelly\textsuperscript{2}

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Abstract

This paper reflects on the PPE4R action research project, in which an interdisciplinary team of Jordanian and UK researchers worked with 60 Jordanian and Syrian people with academic degrees living in refugee camps and local communities in Jordan. The project, set up as a collaboration between universities and UNHCR, aimed to recognize their existing expertise and offer the participatory action researchers (PARs) further training in technical, digital, and social science research. In a PAR process, multi-disciplinary teams were formed to research and address concrete local problems using the combined skills, as well as PARs developing digital literacy coaching for other refugees.

The project was funded with “agile” GCRF Covid funding, and had an explicit “action” focus, aspirations which had to be realized within the confines of academic research procedures and stakeholder interests. Conceived as a response to the Covid-related urgent needs of refugees, the objectives, researcher roles and methods were constantly reviewed and adjusted. An intersectional approach mixed harder to reach groups (due to refugee camp access, connectivity and Covid) with easier to reach groups. Through a layer of paid intermediaries (PARs) and intermediary technologies (e.g. Whatsapp groups and instant translation apps in chats) the boundaries between groups were further eroded.

While structural constraints were many, supporting the individual and collective agency of the PARs was Covid-appropriate, effective and inspiring. We reflect on lessons to be drawn for a future hybrid participatory practice which seeks to advance research practices towards sustainability and decolonization, and retains holistic human connection.
The art of letting go: transforming participatory research on adaptation practices among local livestock-keepers in East Africa in times of Covid-19

Birgit Habermann
International Livestock Research Institute, Kenya

Abstract

Participatory action research (PAR) puts high emphasis on the interaction of the research participants. However, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 the role of researchers in participatory research processes had to be questioned and revisited. To better understand how Covid-19 changed the way PAR is applied, we analysed PAR carried out at five research sites in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. To understand how PAR changed in a component on adaptation research in the PCSL we facilitated a reflexive study with livestock keepers and researchers to document their experiences of PAR during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The lessons learnt in the process of adapting to the realities of doing participatory research in the middle of a pandemic provide important arguments for further amalgamating the PAR philosophy into similar research designs. The onset of the pandemic has led to a further decentering of the researcher and a shift of the focus to the citizen, in this case the local livestock keeper, that made it more participatory in the stricter interpretation of the term. Letting go of controlling both narrative and implementation of the research will be challenging for many research fields. However, this shift of power and this transformation of research methodologies is inevitable if the research should remain relevant and impactful. Ultimately, the transition into a Covid-19 future will have to have an impact on how projects are designed and funded, with more long-term funding, less pressure on providing immediate results, and in supporting long term engagement with more trust in the community and more ownership for the research on a local level.
Exploring Fieldwork Futures: Staff and Student experiences of GEES Fieldtrip provision before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

Catherine Waite, Faith Tucker, Eugeine Tom
University of Northampton, UK

Abstract

This paper forms part of a wider project that evaluates pandemic fieldtrip experiences of both staff and students to consider the future of fieldtrip provision in undergraduate Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences programmes. The paper will draw upon initial findings from two online surveys, one conducted with UK-based staff on their experiences of designing and delivering undergraduate fieldtrips and a second completed by students and recent graduates who participated in fieldtrips prior to, and during the pandemic. Findings from pilot study interviews with students from diverse ethnic backgrounds will supplement this data to discuss the positive and negative experiences of a range of fieldwork provision. We hope to provide an insight into whether a ‘return to normal’ is the best approach to fieldwork or whether pandemic-enforced adaptations should remain as part of fieldwork in the future to help ensure provision is more inclusive and environmentally and socially sustainable.
Camouflaging class at a highly selective educational transition in Zurich, Switzerland

Carlotta Reh, Sara Landolt
Universität Zürich, Switzerland

Abstract

It is well documented that Switzerland’s public school system reproduces socioeconomic differences, particularly at the highly selective transition after sixth grade to either secondary school or the academically focused Gymnasium (SKBF, 2018). However, little is known about how children themselves perceive such socioeconomic inequalities – that we, in accordance to Mistry et al. 2015 and Kostet et al. 2022, understand as class differences – and how they talk about and negotiate (dis)advantages, privileges and inequalities in the phase of this educational transition.

In our presentation, we draw on a four-month long ethnography with seven sixth graders (aged 11-12) from different socio-economic backgrounds during their preparation for the standardized entrance examination Gymnasium including interviews with their parents, teachers and headmasters in Switzerland’s largest city, Zurich; a city with strong spatial inequalities regarding transfer rates to Gymnasium. Our data show that in the children's perception the category class are less relevant at this stage. Other differences, especially whether German is their mother tongue, seem to be more important. Nevertheless, class is not absent. But in those cases where class differences are made explicit by children, these differences are mostly made unrecognizable by teachers reducing it to the distinction of “responsible and irresponsible parents”. A distinction which is strongly tied to parent’s habitus. Especially in socioeconomically relatively homogeneous urban areas making class unrecognizable has a second dimension: here meritocracy and individualization narratives find a fertile breeding ground among pupils; both narratives seem to be rooted in or verbally produce a classless society.
Remote - in person - or both? Reimagining the future of creative, participatory and arts-based methodologies with displaced women in Colombia

Sonja Marzi
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

This paper argues for new hybrid directions of doing feminist research using participatory and arts-based methodologies with displaced women in Colombia. It focuses on an innovative remote participatory audio-visual methodology developed during the pandemic and using participants smartphones. The research project investigates displaced women’s resistance to multiple forms of violence through private and public activism in Medellin and Bogota, Colombia. Using online discussion groups and participatory filmmaking, the research has generated new ways for displaced women to co-produce audio-visual material to engage in research and activism around their challenges settling in the city and hopes for urban futures from a distance. At the same time, not being in one geographical place with participants created significant challenges for building trust relationships and with respect to issues of power and participation; something which became even more evident when doing in person fieldwork in January/February 2022. I reflect on the potential of remote participatory methods to push the boundaries of co-production research designs, especially in contexts of crisis. At the same time remote methodologies cannot completely compensate for in person research interactions. Feminist and participatory/arts-based methodologies can instead benefit from hybrid research designs, during which researchers and participants co-produce knowledge remotely and in person research activities.
Digital Caregiving: Family support groups and local knowledge

Sara Loftus
West Virginia University, USA

Abstract

Covid-19 and the shift to distanced work and learning has opened a window into a patchwork of strategies that family caregivers of children with feeding tubes utilize to juggle caregiving responsibilities with the need (or desire) to socialize, find resources and work. This study examines the growing and shifting roles of digital spaces in the everyday lives of marginalized and/or vulnerable communities. The overall objective is to determine how digital spaces are (re)created by family caregivers and examine how community relationships and digital activities impact family caregivers’ ability to provide care within precarious situations. This research uses digital ethnography to examine the knowledge, expertise and resources generated by family caregivers of children with feeding tubes. The knowledge produced in these digital spaces is unique in that it is co-constructed through thousands of digital interactions with human and nonhuman agents across multidimensional time and space. The rationale for this work is that identifying how digital spaces function as communities for family caregivers helps understand their everyday experiences and the strategies, they use to navigate complex social and economic support systems vital to their caretaking responsibilities.
Learning from fieldwork: experiences from a Development Studies perspective

Gery Nijenhuis
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Abstract

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, students in the MSc degree programme International Development Studies (IDSM) at Utrecht University left their classroom to do a 14-weeks fieldwork in Africa, Asia or Latin America. Through fieldwork, students learn to gather and analyze data in an unfamiliar context, and to interpret these data with a critical eye. Fieldwork also enables IDSM students to acquire and develop ‘soft skills’ such as intercultural competences and ethical awareness. As such, fieldwork is considered an essential ingredient of the IDSM, adding to the identity of the programme: a curriculum without fieldwork was considered “inferior”, by staff, alumni and students. However, since March 2020, two cohorts of students had to embark on remote fieldwork, because of the pandemic. We traced the experiences of these students, and did research on the way they learned from remote fieldwork, using a SOTL-approach: what are the implications of remote fieldwork for the interactions they have with respondents in the field, and the development of intercultural competences? This paper explores the impact of remote fieldwork on the learning of students. It is based on an analysis of assignments, on focus group discussions with students and on interviews with supervising staff.
Spatial planning for urban informal food systems: taking Nanjing as an example

Luoman Zhao
RWTH Aachen University/ Institute of Landscape Architecture, Germany

Abstract

Continuing urbanization and growing urban populations in China have raised concerns about food issues, while the role of the informal sector in food systems has seldom been considered. Urban idle land and consumers’ needs for affordable fresh food provide opportunities for dispossessed farmers and low-income urban residents. Informal urban food production and vending support people who are marginalized by food policies and spatial planning.

This paper aims to optimize informal food systems by integrating related food activities from production to consumption into different types and levels of spatial planning. It firstly analyzed the components and characteristics of informal food systems in China. Through the case study of Nanjing, it analyzed typical spatial settings of informal food systems and summarized challenges faced by informal food systems based on spatial planning dimensions. Then this paper analyzed possibilities of integrating informal food systems into food planning based on Chinese policy and spatial planning structure. Finally, spatial planning strategies and instruments from three levels were given in Nanjing to optimize informal food systems. Protecting, formalizing, and transforming informal food systems by integrating related food activities into different types and levels of spatial planning are the main ways to improve informal food systems.
Establishing critical erosion alarm thresholds using radar-derived elevation data.

James Murphy
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

Coastal erosion is a significant issue for many coastal systems – one that is being exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. It is therefore imperative that coastal areas at risk are monitored and managed appropriately, to ensure the protection of the ecosystem and nearby infrastructure. Through use of remote sensing technologies, the monitoring of coastal systems is becoming increasingly efficient and available at higher resolutions. This study aims to utilise radar-derived digital elevation models (DEM) (Bird, Bell and Plater, 2016) to construct a meaningful critical threshold for erosion through the detection of spurious changes in elevation over time. The high spatial and temporal resolution provided by the radar system enables an observation into seasonal patterns and fluctuations in beach elevations. In order to construct the critical thresholds, several steps must be taken. Firstly, a DEM of difference (DoD) is calculated between survey periods, allowing the visualisation of sediment flux during this time. This technique also provides an opportunity to quantify the volumetric change in sediment throughout the study period, supplying coastal managers with an evidence base for potential intervention strategies. Secondly, the residuals of a pixel-wise unsupervised machine learning method are used over the study period to establish alarm thresholds for significant elevation change. Though surpassing this threshold is not a definitive indicator for intervention, it is nonetheless crucial for coastal managers and stakeholders to understand problem areas and better manage the necessary actions.
Can the roughness (rugosity) of the urban boundary be an advantage for agricultural production towards local markets?

Michel Mouléry
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Abstract

The objective of this presentation is based on research in quantitative geography, shedding light on the analysis of the relationship between city and agriculture with respect to the issue of local supply, in order to help public arbitration. In this research, we hypothesize that the more complex the urban boundaries are (roughness, rugosity), the more positive the effect on the orientation of local production towards local markets. Firstly, on the urban side, we will explain the methodology used in spatial analysis to calculate the rugosity (Brinkley, 2018) of the urban boundary, based on a few cities in southern France. Secondly, on the agricultural side, we will present a methodology in spatial analysis to detect the spatial signature preferably oriented local agriculture (Sanz Sanz, 2016, Deffontaines, 1997). In conclusion, we will confront these two parts and verify by simple statistics, if there is a sign between the rugosity of the urban boundary with the agricultural signature with local tendency. The results will be presented in graphical and map form, with the aim of animating and sharing interesting information for a wide range of participants at the Royal Geographical Society 2022 annual conference.
Reflecting on environmental sustainability and geography fieldtrips: the importance of staff-student participation and dialogue

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Abstract

Climate breakdown and COVID-19 raise important questions for the future of fieldtrips in geography. Building on a longer history of these debates in the discipline, geographers are paying increased attention to the environmental impacts of field-based education. However, there is relatively little study of student engagement with discussions on the environmental sustainability of geographical fieldwork. Reporting on a project involving a survey and semi-structured interviews with undergraduate geographers based at an East Midlands university, exploring these students’ perspectives on geographical fieldwork and environmental sustainability, in this paper we reflect on the specific importance of staff-student collaboration in future decisions about fieldtrips in geography, particularly the importance of a dual-dialogue, participatory approach to decision-making and fieldtrip pedagogy in the discipline.
Analysis The Influencing Factors of Urban Traffic Flows by Using New and Emerging Urban Big Data in Response to COVID-19

Yue Li
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global threat with escalating health, economic and social challenges. To contain the COVID-19 epidemic, the government has adopted different social distancing measures to reduce the transmission rate of SARS-COV-2, especially the restrictions to human mobility in urban areas. Fortunately, the spread of COVID-19 has been controlled and urban traffic is on recovery.

The advancement of Intelligent Transportation Systems has produced a variety of traffic-related data to monitor urban traffic conditions in high spatio-temporal resolution. Such emerging big data promotes the research in urban traffic analysis and allows us to track changes in urban mobility during and after the pandemic.

This research develops a model that combined deep learning and computer vision to analyse traffic flow distributions before, during, and after COVID-19 via various urban parameters and existing traffic data. Road characteristics, weather conditions, and other surrounding environments, such as land use/cover and nearby points of interest (POI) are considered as urban parameters in this model. In addition to the vehicle flows, this research analyses the cyclists and pedestrians traffic flows, which also play a crucial role in the process of urban development, providing insights for urban planning, traffic management, and resource allocation after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results show that the COVID-19 demonstrates a significant impact on the flow of both cyclists and pedestrians, while the traffic flow of vehicles decreases in the first few weeks of lockdown, with a gradual increase later. Regardless of COVID-19, vehicle flows are mainly influenced by road characteristics, while the flows of cyclists and pedestrians show relations with surrounding POI.
Walking, writing, and photographing borders

Mary Pearson
Plymouth University, UK

Abstract

My PhD research investigates photography, reflective writing, and memories focusing on my local parish boundary. This work was created during the Covid pandemic, but not wholly a response to it. By walking and navigating my local parish border and considering imagined borders, I weave together this local landscape and my own personal histories.

The questions that I am considering for this paper are how personal, reflective writings can be relevant to knowledge building and understanding of the relationship between the local and the universal. Geography is at the heart of this research; it is the basis of our world and my thinking centres on the place where I live and my sense of belonging and attachment.

My writing combines my own personal biography of North Devon where I was born, and my current home in a village in South Devon where I can trace family for three hundred years. This interweaving of narratives allows for a personal exploration into the representation of place, with reference to landscape, memories, and the notion of home.

The core of my paper guides you through a journey along the border of both the parish and home for you to discover the ways in which my photography, personal reflections, and writings have driven my thinking and formed my knowledge generation.
Ordering the Enclave: Pastoralizing Surveillance through Migrant Encounters in Singapore

Junjia Ye
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Abstract

Migrant arrival cities, many of which are located outside of European and North American contexts, are experiencing urban growth because of migrants coming from an ever heterogeneous array of backgrounds. The management of migrants at both the level of the state and the everyday is also changing as a response to these shifts. How difference has been conceived, regulated and experienced through encounters in everyday spaces of these arrival cities has been well-documented (Amin, 2012; Watson, 2009; Wilson, 2011). Building upon this body of work, this paper examines the co-production of urban space through managerial practices by the state and the diverse users of weekend enclave space. Part of these practices are constituted through pastoral discourses of care and control. Drawing upon qualitative data conducted before regulations at City Plaza, a weekend migrant enclave in the east side of Singapore, I locate the sites of co-production at the level of policy regulation and at the levels of everyday surveillance in shared spaces where branches of the state such as surveillance technologies, explicit rules on signboards, auxiliary police officers and different groups of new arrivals (ie. “new migrants”) encounter one another regularly on weekends. I demonstrate that this production of difference from various stakeholders reinforces boundaries of civility through encounters, re-producing the desirable/non-desirable migrant. The arrival city is therefore marked by these messy, diffuse generative forces that both subvert and reinforce dominant, centralized modes of place-making and belonging from the margins.
Origin-Destination Flows using GPS Probe Data

Sian Teesdale
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

Origin-destination flows were historically recorded using travel surveys, with the London Traffic Survey being one of the earliest examples of data collection (Boyce and Williams, 2015). Since then, the modernisation of data collection has allowed for the automation of rich data, using locational data obtained from smartphones and vehicles. Origin-destination flow research using autonomous locational data can help visualise commuting corridors across developing countries (Zagatti et al., 2018) and cities (Liang and Chen, 2004), to aid in transportation planning at local- (Alexander et al., 2015) and national-level governments.

This study will disseminate results from origin-destination flows acquired from GPS probe data, using the case study of the San Francisco Bay Area. The individual-level data is aggregated to H3 hex-cells (Brodsky, 2018) before applying an estimated area type designation from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (2018) to each H3 cell, to establish what areas individuals travelled between, and what the net flow of each hex-cell is. Additionally, peak, off-peak, weekdays and weekends flows are compared to establish different spatiotemporal patterns of travel. To ensure validity flows are weighted based on LODES; an origin-destination commuting dataset published annually by the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program (United States Census Bureau, 2019). This presentation aims to present some of the findings from this analysis, written as part of a thesis chapter.
Low carbon teaching in Geography: how should we address the fieldtrip paradox?

Joe Williams
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

Teaching in higher education has an environmental footprint and is inevitably associated with greenhouse gas emissions. There is an increasingly acute tension between universities’ imperative to deliver high quality teaching (part of which involves maintaining international networks and offering fieldwork experience) on the one hand and their moral obligations to decarbonize on the other hand. This paradox is particularly acute in the discipline of geography, which is centrally concerned with understanding and addressing environmental change, and has fieldwork and the study of diverse places at its core (see the recent S.I. in The Professional Geographer, ‘Rethinking professional geographical practice in a time of climate crisis’ – Vol.74, 2022). Moreover, many undergraduate Geography programmes offer far-flung international fieldtrips, with significant associated carbon emissions, as a way of attracting prospective students.

There was increasing interest among Geography departments in addressing this paradox before the global pandemic – for example, the RGS conducted a survey of fieldtrip destinations offered by UK departments in 2019. Covid-19 now offers departments an invaluable opportunity to re-set and re-think more sustainable and inclusive approaches to fieldtrips.

In this paper, we consider how Geography departments can navigate this challenging paradox. Our study is based on an analysis of undergraduate fieldtrips at the Department of Geography at Durham University, as well as reflections from personal experience of teaching on domestic and international trips. We quantify the emissions from each trip before exploring student perspectives through a survey and focus groups. Finally, we consider potential pathways toward a low-carbon model of teaching. Overall, we find a high level of support for decarbonization in the academy among staff and students, and potential for significant emissions reductions with minimal impact on quality of teaching.
Abstract

Place is a consistent theme throughout the work of John Berger - its particularities, meetings, attachments, continuities, and open-ended transformations, marking out geographical difference. Equally, Berger's places are often held in tension with a wider world of diverse agencies and global transformations, recalling the very "question of geography" (Berger and Bielski, 1984), meditating on the relations between general and particular, and stressing 'the irreducibility of contingency' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994). Berger demonstrates the potential for writing place through stories in a way that resonates with the contemporary concerns of many cultural geographers. He makes use of intimate narrative detail in service to a political project that positions creative response as an instrument of progressive, social transformation. Whether sketching the lines of affect (not that Berger would talk in such terms) that produce the experience of a particular rural field; or using an acceptance speech for a literary prize to trace the threads of power and politics connecting the here-and-now to ongoing struggles, conflicts, and violent legacies; his stories attest to "the always slightly surprising range of the possible" (Berger, 1979: 8), highlighting the capacity of peoples and places to resist, change, or stubbornly endure in the face of forces and agents seemingly more powerful. This paper will argue the significance of Berger's writing about place to emphasize how geographers can think with, in and through his diverse output.

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Abstract

The COVID-19 has led to global economic downturn, with following fiscal recovery adding uncertainties to future carbon emissions. Using detailed global multi-regional input-output data, this paper develops a multi-sector and multi-factor structural gravity model that allows an analytical and quantitative decomposition of the emission and output changes into composition and technique effects. We find that the negative production shock of China’s containment policy propagates across the world via international supply chains, with the energy production and heavy manufacturing sectors experiencing the greatest carbon emission shocks. Applying Monte Carlo simulation and dynamic scenario analysis for China’s fiscal recovery packages in the period of 2021–2025, we further reveal that China’s current recovery package is consistent with China’s emission intensity-reduction goals for 2025, but further efforts are required to meet China’s carbon emissions-peak target in 2030 and Cancun 2°C goal. Short-term changes in carbon emissions resulting from lockdowns and initial fiscal recovery in “economic rescue” period will themselves have minor long-term effects, while the transitional direction of future fiscal recovery exerts more predominant impact on long-term carbon emissions. The scale and efficiency improvement effects are more important than the sectoral structure effects of the fiscal recovery in achieving greener economic growth. Our study highlights low-carbon post-COVID-19 transition for global developing countries.
Telling everyday stories of climate change: Participatory dialogues in the urban periphery of Sao Paulo

Susanne Boerner
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

Although many young people worldwide express increasing climate anxiety, for many young people climate change remains something ‘remote’ and ‘abstract’ which they perceive as disconnected from their own lives. In our research with approximately 30 young people aged 12 to 18 in the urban periphery of Sao Paulo, young people experienced the immediate impacts of climate change through more frequent and intense weather events which led to flooding and landslides and which had an impact on access to food, water and energy resources. When asked about if they had heard about climate change, most participants said that ‘this was something that teachers talked about at school’. None of them had heard about youth climate movements and young activists like Greta Thunberg. Despite this emotional disconnection, participants displayed important everyday knowledge on disaster risk, resource scarcity, as well as their everyday adaptive practices (e.g., knowledge of risk areas, saving water, recovery from disasters). To tell these everyday stories, we used (remote) participatory research methods including photo-voice, youth-led walks, participatory video-making and virtual group discussions to engage participants in a critical reflection on their environments, urban development and the impacts of climate change. Results showed that young people have an important everyday knowledge related to the challenges and sources of unsustainability. However, participants struggled to ‘think beyond’ to engage in a dialogue on change and solutions to complex problems. Here, participatory research methods can play an important role in enabling young people to reflect not only on the impacts of climate change but also on their own role as agents of change.
The Infrastructure Rush in Baluchistan, Pakistan: Between Geopolitical Competition, Natural Resources Exploitation and Resistance(s)

Davide Giacomo Zoppolato
West Virginia University, USA. University of Macerata, Italy

Abstract

Traditionally led by Western lead multilateral development banks and global governance institutions, infrastructure financing and development is becoming a central topic of debate within and outside academia. Since the first formulation of the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) in 2013, competition rather than cooperation took the lead in this context. As a response to counteract China, several connectivity strategies (e.g. EU Connecting Europe & Asia, the US strategy for Central Asia, the South Korea’s New Southern) have been created unilaterally with little if none coordination. In fact, these respacing projects are implemented outside multilateralism and, mostly, to strengthen state power and interests of the financing country. Infrastructure are part of a broader exploitation and dispossession project of natural and energy resources of local population placing at the center the margin.

The paper focuses on Baluchistan, Pakistan, an area that rose to prominence thanks to its geostrategic position and for the amount of funding and investment mobilized by China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. While considered marginal from both the Pakistan’s government and the international community, the province is increasingly at the centre of a geopolitical competition and rivalries. It is also a loci of resistance for Baloch people. It details two opposite discourses: the ‘official’ one focusing on the economic development of the area and the one promoted by Baloch people which frames resistance around natural resources exploitation, dispossession and independence. It concludes with a discussion on how to leverage on resistance to advance margin’s issues and priorities at the center of the national and global agenda.
John Berger and changes in cultural geographies of art in particular

David Crouch
University of Derby, UK

Abstract

The writing and thought of John Berger caught the interest of some geographers in the turn of aesthetic interest from the previous signification of art gained from of Kenneth Clark, his TV series on the established hierarchy of Art. That period of dominance was short, its significance soon significantly erased by Berger’s TV series, with new vitality in the acknowledged experience of art that soon enriched cultural geography. The threads of Berger’s writing work through this new critique of power capitalism attuned to art, focused on how we may respond to art, how it may reflect our lives, to the enormous diversity of its use, presentation, sounding of experience; to challenge the power that Clarke celebrated. I have long enjoyed reading Berger’s often playful, cheeky, revolutionary works, often sexually vibrant; mixed with explicit politics. Yet it is rarely considered that in actuality Berger was doing the same thing as Clarke – in a dual play of particular political enquiry, working through culture and geographies. But Berger’s ‘Ways of Seeing’ and ‘About Looking’ were still vision bound. I argue that our encounter with the world and, for example, paintings, is more than that. Berger’s more recent work is psychologically powered. In my engagement with the work of artists, and my own artwork, in particular Peter Lanyon; we can engage the artist turning, listening to his surroundings, smelling the air. In the background Berger hovers, his ‘range of the possible’. More than that, we stifle the worlds we inhabit.
Geography and data: Exploring the use of the Voter File dataset in Atlanta, USA

Billy Southern
Pennsylvania State University, USA

Abstract

The reliance on data availability has made the use of publicly accessible formats such as census data and the American Community Survey practically the default in social science literature. In the US context, this publicly available data is often aggregated to an administratively drawn unit, including the census tract or block group. Within this, the behavior of the aggregate often becomes the focus, and challenges relating to the MAUP, the ecological fallacy, and the uncertain geographic context problem emerge, with area-based effects dependent on the delineation of the spatial unit in focus.

In contrast, individual-level data remains less used across social science literature due to the less-readily available nature of this format. While individual-level data faces challenges of its own (see the atomistic fallacy), an appropriate micro-dataset can offer rich detail on social and economic conditions. This paper forwards the use of the Voter File, which exists as an individual-level dataset containing information on the U.S. Citizen Voting Age Population. Voter File data includes social, economic, and demographic statistics and it exists as the finest-level dataset in the U.S., but it has received little scholarly and academic attention.

Focusing on the City of Atlanta, the research operates with a relatively unused and fine-grained Voter File dataset to compare this with commonly used aggregated data from the Census Bureau and the ACS. The research provides a spatial and statistical analysis on the social and economic conditions of race, income, and employment to illustrate how these patterns are distributed across space and within each dataset. Using a multi-scalar approach, the research examines various spatial units to consider how each dataset performs across different geographies in Atlanta.
Amplifying our students' voice: the co-production of undergraduate field courses (residential and non-residential) to address EDI.

Joanne Clarke, Maria-Martina Quaggiotto, Alison Young
University of Stirling, UK

Abstract

Making education equal, diverse, and inclusive is a crucial topic in Higher Education, including within Environmental Sciences. The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement states that Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) is an integral part of these disciplines and can benefit both pedagogical practice and subject knowledge. Fieldwork is an essential component of Environmental Sciences and represents a great venue to explore EDI challenges experienced by undergraduates and identify potential solutions.

Academics leading students on fieldwork only have access to a limited set of their protected characteristics to help prepare in planning, such as disclosed disabilities. However, many barriers and challenges to participation can be linked to identity characteristics (e.g. socio-economic status) that are not disclosed. Students’ experiences can vary depending not only on the nature of the field-course, but by the intersectionality of their characteristics. Moreover, research into co-design is a developed field but only recently is it being put into practice for EDI purposes. Co-design can be a successful method to improve EDI, but only when participants are involved at every step and their lived experience is the main focus.

Putting undergraduate students at the centre of field-course planning via collaborative inclusivity is a novel approach to address EDI and is at the core of our project. Amplifying the students’ voice through involvement at every step of its realisation, from running workshops, to co-design, -development, -production and -evaluation of the field-courses has the potential to identify and remove environmental, structural, and attitudinal barriers and allow all students to access field-skills training effectively.

We describe the potential environmental, structural, and attitudinal barriers experienced by undergraduates during field-work identified via online questionnaires and workshops and shared our approach to the co-production of a residential and non-residential field course with the aim to improve access to field-skills for all. There is not a set checklist or toolkit that helps to prepare and plan because “one size will never fit all”. However, we demonstrate that with students at the centre of planning we can make field-courses more equitable, diverse, and inclusive for each unique cohort and disseminate good practice with colleagues and potential collaborators.
‘See:Saw’, a re-interpreting of Ways of Seeing: Story telling as a tool in relation to geography via the practice of durational walking and photography

Jeremy Hastings
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Abstract

Early landscape photography encounters were not just with landscapes and those who worked it, engaging aesthetics as ‘beauty through the form’, Friday (2002). The relationship between landscape, seekers of the view and eventually audience, are different to that of Gilpin’s(1782) picturesque, a framing through a particular lens. The conventions of contemporary photography requires each viewer to own a very narrow interest in the immediacy of the image, Berger(1972). How does the embodied artist/photographer perceive scenery presented to me? Berger(1968) proposed that the artist should be alongside audience in expectation of decoding the photograph. My practice-based research seeks to create a grammar through changing the context in which photographer maximises a potential for connecting landscape with audience beyond the narrative of the picturesque. A bridging of the schism between artist and audience is enabled through a new way of storytelling. This way of interpreting the photograph via audience intervention utilises the image as interactive artefact, allowing a storytelling technique to emerge by way of dissemination for artist as well as a decoding for audience. I have named this system See:Saw. The artefact’s physical surface becomes new strata as story, on which the photographer layers the distant physicality of durational experience. Story moves the aesthetic of the embodied encounter to a representation of another. Adopting Berger’s ideas of narration from an audience’s viewpoint as well as storytelling potential derived from Lorimer (2003) I propose that this See:Saw dissemination becomes a catalyst for the viewer to re-engage with a photograph.
Childhood socioeconomic status and late-adulthood health outcomes in China: a life-course perspective.

Tao Zhou
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

The relationship between socioeconomic status and health has been studied widely across many western countries but the relationship is relatively underexplored in China. Using a life-course perspective, this paper examines the associations between six indicators of childhood socioeconomic status with classic late-adulthood health outcomes. The analysis uses logistic and Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression models with data on life history and data from the most recent wave of CHARLS – a nationally representative survey of people aged 45 and older. The models demonstrate that unfavourable socioeconomic status in childhood is, in general, correlated with poorer health outcomes later in life, whereas a more socioeconomically advantaged childhood is associated with better health outcomes in middle and older age. However, for those individuals who were overweight in childhood, the advantaged socioeconomic status effect appears to increase the probability of remaining overweight when older. Furthermore, the indicators of current socioeconomic status as well as the interaction terms between childhood socioeconomic status and adulthood socioeconomic status were introduced, as most existing research in the world, including China, tends to only focus on the mediation effect of current socioeconomic status. The results show that, among all the health outcomes in this research, only the associations between disability-related health variables and adulthood socioeconomic status are moderated by childhood socioeconomic status. The results support the argument that social stratification plays an important role in shaping health and also inform public policies in China with regard to population health.
Urban commons: School feeding programmes, community kitchens and saving schemes - Trends, drivers and, entry points for achieving nutritional justice in urban food systems

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Abstract

In cities in Africa, the Covid-19 pandemic fostered some food access initiatives and hampered others. In Cape Town’s informal settlements, community kitchens run by residents sprung up to feed and nourish neighbours, friends, and families, addressing food insecurity exacerbated by lockdowns and other control measures. These community kitchens replaced state- and NGO-run soup kitchens, places of shame and stigma. At the same time, control measures led to the closing of many food initiatives that were fundamental for the food security of certain groups; for example, school feeding schemes. When schools all over the world (including Nairobi, Cape Town and Ouagadougou) shut down for extended periods, children from poorer households lost access to what was often their only complete meal of the day. While school feeding is now widely recognised by national governments and development organisations as a tool for food system transformation, non-state and non-market initiatives such as community kitchens are often ignored by policymakers. Assessing the importance of these initiatives in ensuring food security – understood in its six dimensions of availability, access, utilisation, stability, agency and sustainability – and upholding urban residents’ right to food, this paper provides insights from two case studies in Nairobi and Cape Town and highlights their potential to help urban food systems transition towards more social, economic, and ecological justice and resilience. The paper builds on early results of an action research programme and explores the concept of urban food commons to understand the governance processes, wealth-sharing and care work efforts that underlie the running of these initiatives in marginalised urban neighbourhoods.
John Berger’s *A Seventh Man* as a Critical Spatial Praxis

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Royal College of Art, UK

Abstract

Joshua Sperling sees Berger’s work as “a prolonged attempt to bridge the philosophical opposites of his time: between freedom and commitment, ideology and experience, word and image.” Looking at the work of Berger through the lens of space, with a specific focus on the book *A Seventh Man* it is possible to add “theory and practice” to this sequence which, according to Sperling describes the work whose net effect is “to disrupt categorical divisions and disciplinary systems too often taken for granted.” (Sperling 2018: 12). John Berger and his co-author, Swiss photographer Jean Mohr described *A Seventh Man* as "a book of images and words about the experience of migrant workers in Europe." Published in 1975, the book was an attempt to find an answer to a question of who migrant workers in Western Europe were and where did they come from. It offered not just some answers, but a methodology on how to ask questions that matter, spatially. Expanding the concept of *critical spatial practice*, introduced in 2003 by architectural historian Jane Rendell to describe and define the “projects that operated at a triple crossroads: between theory and practice, between public and private, and between art and architecture,” with which she was keen to “stress three particular qualities of those works: the critical, the spatial and the interdisciplinary,” with Paolo Freire’s concept of praxis, which he defined as a “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.” (Freire 1972: 52) in this paper, I will propose that this book can be read as a critical spatial praxis, and an opening towards a concept of *really useful spatial knowledge*. 
Inflating the carbon bubble: economic inertia, stranded assets and the need for a green recovery.

Dan Chester
Lancaster University, UK

Abstract

Future pathways for societies are restricted by the decisions made previously when investing in long-lived commodities and infrastructure. This is clearest in the context of the climate emergency: as much as 42% of the global economy could be at risk of being made obsolete to facilitate a transition to net zero by 2050, at great financial and social cost.

Despite their global significance, attempts to estimate the risk (and geographies) of ‘stranded assets’ have been limited in their scope, and climate models are typically unable to represent the full inertia and turnover dynamics of capital. The timescales on which investments are made, returns on them are expected, and therefore inertia is produced, are poorly understood in orthodox economics and in climate science. Geography and ecology, however, which understand the turnover of systems well, have a vital contribution to make here.

We develop a quantitative framework for estimating the residence time of capital assets in the economy based on Little’s law, deriving an annual distribution of investments across timescales which we argue is a fundamental property of the economy. We use this to simulate the risk to jobs and capital of recovery based on fossil fuels, that delays further the necessary net zero transition.
“From the spectacular to the mundane”: Digital/material housing struggles, feminist care, and the return of the political in post-crash Dublin

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Trinity College Dublin, Republic of Ireland

Abstract

This paper offers a feminist reading of post-crash housing struggles and their political possibilities in post-crash Dublin, influenced by the expanding field of feminist digital geographies (Elwood and Leszczynski, 2018; Elwood, 2020). Dublin, like elsewhere, is experiencing on the one hand increasing urban poverty, social marginalisation, and housing insecurity, and on the other the normalisation of commodification, financialisation, and capital accumulation (see Soederberg, 2021). Like elsewhere, these processes of neoliberal urbanism have been subject to resistance (Mayer et al., 2016) and housing and homelessness have emerged as two major issues around which activists have attempted to build collective and political subjectivation (Hearne et al., 2018; Di Feliciantonio and O’Callaghan, 2020). In this paper, I put two of the central but underexplored features of contemporary housing struggles in dialogue by highlighting firstly the simultaneously digital/material dynamics of housing activism and secondly the politics of radical care that housing activist collectives pursue in their practices. Using digital ethnographic and interview data, I assess the political potentialities of post-crash housing struggles in Dublin, which I interpret as particularly potent or ‘political’ (Swyngedouw, 2018) when attentive to and engaged in a feminist ethic of care - for the homeless, the self, and each other. The digital/material character of contemporary housing struggles, however, mediates this ethic and its political potentialities in ways which alter the time-spaces of struggle (from the spectacular to the mundane) and requires critical engagement with the constraints and possibilities of the complex, paradoxical, and contingent within the digital (McLean et al., 2019).
Experiment Rural Development - Piloting Digital Technologies in Southern Tanzania

Astrid Matejcek
Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

Abstract

Since digitalisation has become part of the overarching development agendas for the Global South (ICT4D), the modernisation of agriculture is becoming increasingly realised in the light of mobile connectivity, Big Data, artificial intelligence, and new sensor technologies. In the process, implementing actors no longer solely rely on established methods and concepts to pursue agricultural development projects, but pilot new approaches that should also serve to generate further knowledge about these new technologies. By testing them in the field, they appear to revive the idea of “Africa as a Living Laboratory” developed by Tilley (Jahr?) regarding the colonial context. Building on this and further inspired by laboratory ethnographies within STS scholarship, in this talk I will present an ethnographic approach to such new technologies and the ways in which they inform practices of testing and developing in rural Tanzania. Instead of simply seeing these digital technologies as welcome instruments to foster connectivity, empowerment, an increased production, and wealth creation – as usually advertised in development –, this approach foregrounds the unintended and unexpected effects of the set-up, operation, and outcomes of such pilot projects. Illustrating the ambivalence between empowerment through and new dependencies on digital connectivity, the ideal of rapid action based on digital information sharing on the one hand, and the de-skilling effects for on-farm actors on the other, I will particularly attend to the paradoxical nature of these living laboratories and the conflicting logics between experimentation and development they entail.
Ethnic Discrimination on the Shared Short-Term Rental Market of Airbnb: Evidence from a Correspondence Study

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Abstract

Although studies have shown ethnic discrimination in the sharing economy, there is little research about discrimination on Airbnb. As the first correspondence study after the anti-discrimination directive launched by Airbnb in 2016, we examine whether there is still ethnic discrimination against guests on Airbnb. We conducted 1043 correspondence tests on Airbnb in Belgium during the Covid-summer of 2021. Regression results indicate that guests with Moroccan names are 7.2% less likely to be accepted than those with Belgian names, while there is no discrimination against guests of Polish origin. Non-professional Airbnb hosts tend to discriminate much less than professional hosts. The ethnic difference between Belgian and Moroccan guests accrues to 14.3% among professional hosts. Moreover, revealing the vaccination status of the guest through the vaccination certificate does not impact the level of discrimination. These findings suggest that the anti-discrimination policy of Airbnb has not been successful enough in tackling ethnic discrimination.
A case of school ‘dropouts’ among children from waste picking communities in Delhi

Loritta Chan
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Abstract

Waste pickers continue to be one of the most vulnerable, stigmatised groups in India. Despite the promises of a better future that schooling can potentially bring, children from waste picker communities often have to leave school out of obligation due to early marriage, migration, or sudden deaths or illnesses in the family that necessitates children to work and help with household responsibilities. While there are children who have no choice but to leave, there are also those who go against their parents’ wishes and decide to quit school. In this paper, I explore the reasons why children, specifically youth aged 11 to 18 years old from waste picking communities in Delhi, choose to leave school. I unpack the pressures and expectations they have to negotiate at home and at school, and the new identities and tensions they find themselves tussling with - as a youth, a literate, and a dropout.
Abstract

Urban planning, infrastructure, and intervention are never neutral in a more extensive sense. Power relations always matter. The long-lasting view that urban planning is a technocratic process is strangely upheld until recently in Indonesian cities. In a way, it is a reproduction of colonial practices. No meaningful participation and collaboration are considered necessary, desirable, or even possible. As a social product habitat, kampungs are produced, built, and expanded without following technocratic logic. This condition and how kampung operates, along with the problematic land tenure and sometimes problematic location, always put kampung on the margin and prone to expulsion. As a result, resistance always stands up against plans from above.

Historically, Jakarta is a city that exists with a split duality, formality vs. informality; modern vs. vernacular; rulers vs. the people; rich vs. poor; local people vs. migrants; kota vs. kampung; men vs. women; center vs. periphery - the former dominating the latter and the latter have to resist and struggle in order to keep their place in the city. From 2013 to 2016, the struggles of the marginals are heightened, with 305 forced evictions cases happening within 2014-2015.

During that period, we worked together with thirteen kampungs in Jakarta. We have identified ten strategies and tactics that utilize and practiced by the urban poor and their allies to resist evictions, consolidate power and claim their housing rights. The strategies and tactics are interdependent and intertwined with different purposes and actors.
A Backfitting Maximum Likelihood Solution to Hierarchical and Geographically Weighted Regression Model.

Yigong Hu
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

Spatial heterogeneity is a typical and common form of spatial effect which refers to the uneven distribution in geographical entities and their relationships. Geographically Weighted Regression (GWR) and its extensions, including Multiscale GWR (MGWR), are important local modelling techniques in exploring spatial heterogeneity based on data borrowing. When dealing with spatial data of overlapping samples, GWR-based models would encounter several problems, such as tremendous variations in bandwidths. As data of this characteristic have spatial hierarchical structures (i.e., they have group-level and sample-level variables), Hierarchical Linear Modelling (HLM) is suitable to deal with them. But a problem would occur that for some position-related fixed effects, spatial heterogeneity is missing in their estimations. In this paper, we are going to propose a model combining GWR and HLM, called HGWR. It divides coefficients into three types: local fixed effects, global fixed effects, and random effects. Correspondingly, we also propose a back-fitting maximum likelihood solution to it. Results of a simulation experiment and a robust check experiment show that this model could successfully distinguish local fixed effects from others. Furthermore, the spatial heterogeneity is reflected in estimations of local fixed effects, together with the spatial hierarchical structure in other effects. Compared with others, which are only good at fitting some types of effects, HGWR produces estimations of lowest deviations no matter which coefficients are active. For big data, although MGWR could produce comparable results, HGWR is more efficient.
Co-Creating a Healthy Parks Framework

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Abstract

This paper critically discusses the co-creation of a Healthy Parks Framework developed by University College London (UCL) and Camden and Islington Local Authorities. Our Framework feeds into and develops Camden and Islington’s Future Parks Accelerator ‘Parks for Health’ programme designed to strategically examine the role that public open spaces have in improving residents’ health and in reducing health inequalities. To support this aim, we have developed an operational Framework via a participatory process that will be used to assess, plan, and maintain parks in the two boroughs and beyond with public health objectives in mind.

The Framework is designed to ensure that boroughs can review and develop their own measurable action plans to improve how their spaces support local communities’ health. Our Framework is a visual assessment tool which can be used to 1) show the different key characteristics of a health promoting park / green space 2) assess a range of key characteristics and indicators to ascertain the extent to which a green space or park contributes to the health of neighbouring communities; 3) clarify the guiding values that should govern the management of the park / green spaces in order to ensure that the principles of health are achieved and 4) explain and illuminate the pathways between the different key characteristics and the desired health outcomes, and provide evidence for them.

The Framework can be used to educate publics and policymakers about the relationship between parks / green spaces and health; assess and maintain existing spaces and facilities with health principles in mind, identify what elements of a space and its facilities are significant for public health, plan spaces, activities, and facilities with health in mind; and engage publics and other stakeholders in these processes.

In this paper we will reflect on the processes that facilitated the Framework’s development and critically evaluate how it is to be applied.
‘Diamond Hill’: A Cinematic Urban Study on the Historical Transformation of Squatter Areas in Hong Kong

Zhuozhang Li
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

This paper explores the socio-spatial (re)production of squatter areas in Hong Kong by analysing archives and Hong Kong urban cinema. I will examine how the squatter areas in Hong Kong have historically provided a material and social space for marginalised groups, and how they influence the way of perceiving and appropriating the urban space in contemporary Hong Kong.

This raises several questions in relation to what and where the squatter areas were in the city, what relation between the squatter areas and people’s socio-spatial practices was, and how films represented these informal settlements within the particular political, cultural and historical context. In order to demonstrate this, I will draw attention to several Hong Kong city films (such as Cops and Robbers [1979], The Lunatics [1986], Hollywood Hong Kong [2002]), all portraying people’s everyday practices, social structures and architecture in the squatter villages, as well as their relations to the city. These films depict those spaces as not merely an urban fringe of the city, but also a space of empowerment for the people to (re)claim their right to the city. By examining the historical context of the squatter areas in the city, from its colonial development and the ‘Mass Migration Wave’ to the market-led urbanisation and the process of privatisation, I will argue that the (trans)formation of these urban peripheral spaces provide a spatial and ideological basis of the urban informality and the fluid identity of Hong Kong.
Infrastructural eviction: the struggle for housing of the squatters in the renewal of the harbour of Rio de Janeiro

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Abstract

Following a homeless movement that used to occupy several abandoned buildings at the central harbour of Rio de Janeiro city, this work aims to explore how infrastructure, and so sociotechnical management, played a key role in the urban rehabilitation process that evicted more than a thousand poor families of the area promising a global Olympic future for Rio. Remains of demolished houses and debris left on the doors, destruction of trees and sidewalks, open and excavated streets, disconnected pipes and loose wires, light and water supply cutoffs: a large range of eviction techniques operate through and upon infrastructure making distinctions between preservation and removal, and representing the material connections (or disconnections) of agents of governance and houses. Narrating the place as a “housing void” to be filled, the project promised the renovation of infrastructural systems by the private sector and the attraction of new inhabitants, but had as actual result the production of void and emptiness. If cables, pipes, ducts and connections link the state management to the occupations collectives, it is also through the precariousness and intermittence of these networks that this community is excluded from the territory, causing the infrastructural destruction itself to be seen as a mode of urbanization on the Global South.
Logics of care in temporary container homes at the edge of the city

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Abstract

This paper examines the urban assemblage of the so-called post-mobile policy of the city of Ghent as a social work intervention. In 2020, this policy put an end to the toleration of the presence of informal settlements by especially Intra-European migrants with Roma ethnicity. At the same time, on the outskirts of the city, a temporary housing project was proposed, including very intensive individual accompaniment trajectories focusing on children’s education, language acquisition and employment. Relying on an eight months urban ethnography, this paper describes and analyses the underlying logics and consequences of this local social welfare policy, at the intersection of migration, homelessness and the urban space. We do this using the different hybrid frameworks of social work proposed by Ornellas et. al (2016), exposing the frictions that exist between different actors involved. We argue that the post-mobile policy downplays the importance of the structural on the local level, e.g. neglecting dynamics of EU labour migration, historical processes of exclusion and systemic racism, whilst urging to formalize all way of living on its territory. In doing so, it risks to illegalize the survival strategies of those in the margin offering little social change in return.
Cosplay as Personal Expression in Restrictive Environments: An Autoethnographical Case Study on the Yamacon Anime Convention in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

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Abstract

Cosplay is a mode of dressing and acting where individuals not only costume themselves as a character, but act as said character (Geczy 2016). Cosplayers consciously abandon physical reality; in places of cosplay, such as conventions, cosplayers act as their characters, which may be different from their own identities not only in terms of appearance, but in gender identity and sexuality (Geczy 2016). My research explores how cosplay allows for the embodiment of transgender and homosexual identities that are repressed in socially conservative spaces; I explore the effect that a politically conservative area has on queer cosplayers, their community, and the places they cosplay. I employ an auto-ethnographic approach to document my experiences at the Yamacon Anime Convention in Pigeon Forge, Sevier County, Tennessee, where I have cosplayed for seven years. This space was a testing ground for my own queer embodiment, as I came to terms with my homosexuality and transgender identity within in a larger atmosphere of queer repression--- an Appalachian American South area is dominated by White evangelicals who overwhelmingly voted for Donald Trump, supporting his platform of queer exclusion that reinforces the cisgender heteronormative White patriarchy (2020 Republican Party Platform Resolution; Best Places 2021).
Temporal layers of Palestinian refugees’ futures

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Abstract

On a political level, Palestinian refugees’ futures have often been discussed through the topic of the right of return. On this spatiotemporal trajectory, a line is drawn between the past in Palestine and a future in Palestine, and the present in exile is simply a state of waiting. However, in ethnographic encounters another spatiotemporal trajectory emerges, one that draws from the past in exile and directs towards those spaces in which reaching one’s aspirations would be possible. This trajectory could be described as that of everyday life, as it is not based on national nor political claims and aspiration but rather more individual ones, ones that emerge from the experienced limitations that life in camps and the position of a Palestinian refugee produce.

In Palestinian national/political narratives these two trajectories have often been viewed as competing, that seeking personal improvements in exile could lead to weakening of the claim of return. Yet, in this presentation, I take another approach and consider these temporal trajectories as concurrent rather than contradictory. I consider that they do not produce competing futurities but rather envision futures on different levels and on different timeframes, and ones that answer different needs. By leaning on ethnographic fieldwork among Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and West Bank, I discuss the futurities these two temporal trajectories envision, how they at times overlap and at times cross, and while they can lead to different directions, they both reflect the experiences of Palestinian refugees.
Mapping Planning Policy/Mapping Trans Experience

Matt Smith
University of Brighton, UK

Abstract

Urban planning research and literature is increasingly considering what LGBTQ-inclusive policy and practice looks like, and how current and historical practice has reproduced heterosexual and cisgender normativities. The doctoral research conducted demonstrates firstly, how and when trans is considered within contemporary planning practice of an English local authority by utilising feminist poststructural policy analysis. Secondly, the research used creative map-making interviews and workshops with trans inhabitants to explore their relationships and experiences of Brighton & Hove. This research brings into dialogue differing forms of knowledge production to understand how urban planning choreographs inclusion of trans and produces a ‘sensitive’ trans subject. Moreover, inhabitants’ maps and narratives explore their embodied experiences as a form of engagement and alternative knowledge production around planning the trans-inclusive city.
**Big Data and Vulnerability in Disasters**

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**Abstract**

The use of big data in disaster risk management has been increasing in recent years (especially in the last decade) and a high number of studies have been produced with the purpose to investigate how big data can support emergency operations. Social media are the main big data sources used for this purpose. However, some first criticalities emerged and need to be further investigated, especially considering social justice issues.

Accordingly, this work aims to offer a critical analysis on how the use of big data coming from social media could have consequences on vulnerability distribution and produce further challenges for disaster risk management. In particular, this presentation will focus on the challenges that derive from an increasing use of social platforms in providing and receiving quality information during disasters. Aspects of accessibility to data and technologies, data quality, and their implications on disaster mobility are analyzed. The study is based on an in-depth literature review and on field research (semi-structured interviews and focus groups) carried out in Italy between 2021-2022. This presentation is the result of the work provided as part of the EU H2020 founded project LINKS (http://links-project.eu).
Mobilizing trans studies in urban geography: researching trans exclusion in public spaces in Buenos Aires

Francisco Romero
Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina

Abstract

Geographers have been researching trans individuals over the past fifteen years, albeit often through frameworks developed to study cisgender LGBQ individuals. Following Todd (2021), I argue that trans studies could contribute to the geographical study of trans experiences and would themselves benefit from engaging with spatial perspectives. In this paper, I aim to illustrate some potential mutual contributions between both fields. To this end, I present a case study on trans women's and travestis’ exclusion from public spaces in Buenos Aires due to anti-trans legislation and policing in recent history. This case study, which is part of my PhD research, is based on field and archival research, and draws from Latin American and anglophone trans studies and geographical theories.

On the one hand, I mobilize trans theory and practice to analyze how public space is produced and regulated in a trans-exclusionary fashion. I focus on the concepts of cissexism and of anti-trans administrative violence, and on work by trans and travesti activists in Buenos Aires which shows how police persecution on the city’s streets has impacted their everyday lives. Conversely, I show how a spatial framework can further trans studies’ aim to understand trans people’s living conditions. I draw from the mobilities turn to understand how and why exclusion from public spaces shapes trans women’s and travestis’ daily lives: restrictions on their mobility not only hinder access to different places across the city, but also preclude the enjoyment and the social interactions which can materialize within mobility practices themselves.
Uncertainty in aggregated data products derived from mobile phone data

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Abstract

In the UK, the National Health Service (NHS) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) produce several data products describing patterns of population change and human mobility which have been used to study the spread of COVID-19. Some of these datasets are openly available while others contain confidential information and can only be accessed after a successful application by the researcher. Data from the NHS and ONS undergoes methodological review and analysis of representativeness prior to public release to provide generalisable descriptions of human behaviour that is representative of the UK population. To augment data produced by the UK government, and to support COVID-19 response, internet companies including Google, Apple, and Facebook have produced aggregated data products on population and human mobility in the UK. These products are typically produced by harvesting information from mobile devices actively using a company’s internet services. Mobility measures are highly dependent on the size and socio-economic composition of the mobile phone users population, a type of information that could breach user’s confidentiality. For this reason, the data is highly aggregated and transformed in such a way that is very difficult to properly assess bias and representativeness of the data without processing the original raw data. The Consumer Data Research Centre (CDRC) acquired a dataset with anonymized individual level mobile phone data from Huq Industries, a mobile application data aggregator. We have combined this highly granular mobility data with census information on the demographic characteristics of groups of mobile device users. This work will uncover how issues of bias, representativeness, and confidentiality drive the aggregation of high-resolution anonymized point data and will help to assess the appropriateness of mobile device data for describing the behaviour of the general UK population and guiding future public health interventions.
People-place relationships in geothermal project development teams' approaches to engagement

Thomas Hambley
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Abstract

The relationships between people and place have been explored for their potential influence on the proposed development of renewable energy projects (Devine-Wright 2011, McLachlan 2009) and have been discussed in the context of geothermal energy and sustainable uses of the subsurface (Lambert and McComas 2020, Hymans and Uchikoshi 2021). Whilst the bulk of this work has focused on conducting research with local communities, there has been less conducted on speaking with those working to develop projects. Project development teams will not only have their own constructions and relationship with the potential location of a project, but they will also be engaging with local communities and their place relationships throughout the timeline of the project. There is therefore an interesting opportunity for research to investigate this gap in literature to gain insight into how the theory of place relationships are experienced in a practical environment, as well as to the extent to which it is transferable to professional groups in the energy transition sector. This research seeks to address this gap by utilising three subsurface and geothermal projects—two UK Geoenergy Observatories in Cheshire and Glasgow and the United Downs Deep Geothermal Power Project in Cornwall—to investigate how the place relationships of local communities are experienced by project development teams throughout the process of engagement, how these experiences impact the engagement process and the project itself and how project development teams themselves construct place.
Trans necropolitics in digital space: remembrance vs. visibility on YouTube

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Abstract

Over 20 years since Whittle wrote about the Trans Cyberian Mailway (1998), transgender use of digital space has evolved from the relative anonymity of message boards to specialised trans subcultures on every major social media platform. In reviewing the literature, YouTube as a platform appears to have received most academic attention for its trans-made content. However, work tends to focus on the popular genre of “transition journey” videos, in which trans people document their progress through social and/or medical transition (Horak, 2014. Eckstein, 2018. Etengoff, 2019. Rothbaum et al., 2021). This is valuable work but there is a noticeable absence of research into videos produced on the topics of the two international days of trans activism every year- Trans Day of Remembrance (TDOR) and Trans Day of Visibility (TDoV).

Whilst TDoR’s stated purpose is to honour the trans people who have died by violence, it has been critiqued for utilising the deaths of primarily trans women of colour to agitate for change that has primarily benefited white trans people (Lamble, 2008, Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013). Likewise, TDoV’s stated purpose is for trans people to be centred whilst still alive, but has been critiqued by Black trans women, who already suffer from hypervisibility, which puts them in danger (Moore, 2021).

We aim to look at the 10 most popular videos on YouTube (by views and ratings), on the topics of TDoR and TDoV. We will conduct a comparative content analysis of themes with an intersectional focus, with results available at the time of presentation.
Reflecting across interdisciplinary research-in-progress

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Abstract

Interdisciplinary research projects are widely upheld as an opportunity to bring together diverse perspectives that transcend disciplinary divided and traditional approaches to scholarship. Such configurations have proven to be particularly popular for research and actions working on or towards just and sustainable recoveries. However, such collaborations can also invite particular negotiations, translations, and compromises.

This open panel discussion brings together session organisers, presenters, and audience members to collectively reflect upon the challenges and opportunities that emerge from diverse expertise and interests within an interdisciplinary research project.

Panellists begin by briefly introducing and sharing emerging lessons from interdisciplinary research-in-progress. Discussed projects will include:

- Climate CAMPAIGNers: an international project supported by EU Horizon 2020 that brings together scholars, municipalities, civil society organisations, and digital entrepreneurs to develop a digital app and policy guidance to encourage more sustainable urban lifestyles and behaviours across 15 cities in 14 countries.
- Everyday experiences of climate change: a collaboration with Adeeba Risha (BRAC) and Gina Ziervogel (University of Cape Town), illustrator Cat Sims and the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria, Australia. The collaboration is producing a comic that illustrates qualitative research on low-income families’ experiences of climate change in Bangladesh, South Africa, Bolivia, Puerto Rico, and Barbuda.
- Austerity and Altered Lifecourses: an international project supported by UKRI Future Leaders Fund which takes an in-depth and comparative look at how austerity is experienced by young people in Manchester, Barcelona, and Sardinia. The project brings together third sector organisations, housing associations, grassroots movements, and academics to develop creative oral history methods, comparative design, and co-production techniques.

Panellists, presenters, and audience members will exchange questions and consider possibilities for creative, innovative, interdisciplinary research to inform and contribute to recovery. To conclude, participants will reflect on opportunities for collective learning, exchange, and collaboration beyond the session.
How Many Bikes? Quantifying the World’s Bikeshare Industry

Oliver O’Brien
University College London, UK

Abstract

This talk evaluates a number of techniques which are carried out in parallel to estimate the total number of shared bikes across the world. The techniques include API data consumption, cell sampling, text scraping, quota announcements and image analysis.

The modern bikeshare industry was born in 2007 with the first large-scale, fully-automated, card-secured network in Lyon, France. Since then well over 2000 similar fleets have launched. Normally publicly funded with fixed docking stations and terminals, the industry was disrupted in 2017 by dockless fleets, with locks on the bicycle itself and access via smartphone apps. The reduced costs of these allowed fully commercial operations to flourish. Analysing these newer fleets is challenging, due to fierce competition, and some conflict between operators and city authorities. Different countries (and city halls) have different policies and approaches to opening up such datasets, with exemplars such as Norway and Switzerland standing in contrast to parts of the Far East.

The Meddin Bikesharing World Map has been cataloguing and quantifying the global footprint of bikeshare for over 10 years. To keep the map’s database as up to date as possible, a wide variety of techniques are employed which are introduced, and their quality and provenance examined, in this talk. Fully quantitative, semi-automated techniques such as API consumption and cell sampling are complemented by examination of public announcements, glimpses into city dashboards and even street-level imagery. Gradually, with enough diverse datasets harnessed, a reasonable approach to the “truth” can be approached.
How we fuck and unfuck the world: Intimacy as method in trans sex research

H Howitt
University of Brighton, UK

Abstract

What does research look like when consent, creativity, and connection is valued over truth, rigor, and impact? What happens to academic knowledge production when we refuse the erotophobic sterility that lingers like a bad hangover from modernity’s myth of scientific superiority, and instead return to what we have always been: beings hard-wired to connect meaningfully with other humans, non-humans, and more-than-humans? In this presentation, I reflect on what a peculiar and terrifying time it is to be a trans disabled scholar, and show how coalition building is the only way to unfuck ourselves. Drawing on my PhD project ‘how we fuck’ I show how love, hope, vulnerability and solidarity coalesce to produce what I term ‘intimacy as method’. Intimacy as method intervenes to help liberate both trans sex from its dominant narratives of suffering, and trans sex research from its hostile customs of squeamishness and violent legacies of Eurocentric philosophy.
ASSEMBLAGES OUT OF STEAM: TOWARDS A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR GEOTHERMAL ENERGY AS A SOCIO-TECHNICAL ASSEMBLAGE

Rozanne Spijkerboer¹, Ethemcan Turhan¹, Andreas Roos², Jose Opazo³, Marco Billi⁴, Sofia Vargas-Payera⁴, Marco Armiero²

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Abstract

Geothermal energy appears be a renewable source of energy which is not affected by weather and seasonal variations and that can produce a stable base-load capacity year-round. The potential of geothermal energy for energy transition is increasingly recognized by governments. According to International Energy Agency, electricity generation from geothermal grew 2% year-on-year in 2020 and is led by a few countries that recently started tapping their resources more effectively. However, whether geothermal energy is a sustainable source of heat and/or electricity depends on how it is deployed in the specific context. In light of these potential benefits and pitfalls, it is striking that there is only limited attention for geothermal energy from a social science and humanities (SSH) perspective. Geothermal energy is still largely addressed as a technological and/or geological issue in both science and practice. This paper aims to go beyond such narratives in positioning critical social science research as an integral lens in exploring the promises and pitfalls of geothermal energy across three cases in Sweden, Chile and Turkey. Here, we first provide an overview of the current state of geothermal energy as a decarbonization strategy. Later, we move on to review the existing literature in order to show that studies that do address geothermal energy from an SSH perspective tend to be of a descriptive nature and lack analytical diversity. Consequently, in line with calls for more object-oriented ontologies in energy and social science studies, we provide insights on how a socio-technical assemblages lens can provide a good fit to study the promises, pitfalls and spatialization of geothermal energy as a decarbonization strategy. We conclude the paper with a research agenda with insights from our three case studies and call for further engagement with this topic in SSH research with attention to specificities of global South and North contexts.
An Assessment of how Representative Large Mobile-Phone Location Datasets are in the Context of Geodemographic Analysis. Two Case Studies.

Louise Sieg, James Cheshire
University College London, UK

Abstract

Big data has seen a rapid uptake in geographic research. Whether for planning purposes, transport or epidemic tracking, mobility data such as our in-app mobile phone dataset have gained traction from the research community and are disseminated rapidly. However, questions persist in understanding how representative these novel datasets are of the wider population, particularly when considering the uncertainty brought by aggregation before distribution.

This abstract aims to provide an initial assessment using a large dataset of approximately 7 billion mobile phone location points provided by Huq Ltd. The first case study focuses on an initial join of the data to London Output Area Classifications using traditional methods, analysing the impact of dataset aggregation on population representation covered by the data. We show that certain populations are under-represented or over-represented in the dataset depending on the aggregation scale chosen. In a second case study, we assess our dataset’s potential in researching populations whose patterns are hard to retrace using traditional census datasets and join-methods, using the example of night-time workers and shift worker population. This second analysis aims to visualise the provenance and activity clusters of night-time workers in London, showcasing the new potential geodemographic analysis to be conducted using these large consumer datasets.

With this research, we both aim to (1) highlight the importance of transparent method to reduce uncertainty in representativeness of such datasets and (2) exemplify the potential of this data for novel analysis of under-studied populations, quantifying the uncertainty of representativeness as outlined by (1).
Cast(e)ing off Materials: The Changing Nature of Social Hierarchies Among Waste Pickers in Nomadic Communities in Delhi

Aparna Agarwal
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Abstract

Historically, waste work in South Asia was structured around rigid caste hierarchies and was dominated by particular scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities. However, waste work is no longer limited to ST and SC communities. Many other communities, such as Muslim and Hindu OBCs, de-notified tribes and others are also involved in waste work and they have subsequently come to bear the burden of untouchability and the stigma attached to such work.

This paper attempts to map the social lives of nomadic communities, Masets and Qalandars, living in and around Bhalswa landfill, in Delhi, which are not traditionally associated with waste work. Instead, they have been pushed into waste work because of their historical marginalization and exclusion from their traditional work of animal taming over the last thirty years. Through a series of life histories, this paper examines the lives led by people belonging to these communities and explores the relationship between nomadic communities and waste work. Through this exploration, the paper offers a lens to understand the newly formed social relations around the Bhalswa landfill, located on the margins of Delhi, and hopes to understand the multiple contradictory aspects in the life of a waste picker, belonging to nomadic communities.

Having been historically criminalized by the colonial government and marginalized by the post-colonial government, the community has been always at the receiving end of the socio-economic ostracization. Their engagement with waste work has furthered their socio-economic marginalization. Moreover, the waste workers belonging to these communities also bear the brunt of stigmatization and new forms of untouchability practices perpetrated by their relatively upper caste Muslim neighbors such as Khans, Qureshis etc. Thus, the community today stands at the intersection of multiple forms of marginalization-stemming from their historical identity of Khanabadosh to that of their present day identity as waste workers. Looking at the complex past and present day socialities, I examine how waste workers belonging to nomadic communities construe their life with respect to their experiences of untouchability and stigmatization, and what repercussions these experiences have on the understanding of changing social hierarchies among various caste communities.
Data and AI in MaaS platforms: how to care for sustainability in hybrid urban governance

Eriketti Servou
Eindhoven University of Technology, Netherlands

Abstract

This paper explores the understudied nexus of data, AI, and governance in Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS), and the role it plays in relation to sustainable mobility in cities. MaaS is often discussed as a “game changer” in achieving sustainable mobility by providing an alternative to private cars. It refers to integrating various mobility services into one digital platform, and centrally works with (big) data. To realize its sustainability goals, MaaS platforms need to match user demand at an aggregate level with the transport system supply optimum. This dynamic processing of supply and demand requires complex decision-making, which needs AI algorithms trained with (big) data.

AI is highly relevant for three key levels of MaaS: individual end user for customizing the offer to accommodate user demand as well as nudging users for specific modes, data integration of different mobility suppliers and services, and mobility system optimization through ultimately bundling demand and supply. This raises crucial questions of governance, as the mediation of data-trained AI entails a hybrid model of governance that involves both humans and algorithms. These questions include issues of “algocracy”, accountability, trust, bias and knowledge asymmetries between stakeholders.

This paper aims to provide insights on these key issues by integrating technical literature (smart mobility, transport modelling, computer engineering) with social science literature (algorithmic governance, platform urbanism, data governance), to understand how data and AI reconfigures urban mobility governance and what implications this has for sustainability. The paper also identifies a future research agenda.
Science, Society and the Subterranean: On the Political Geology of Nuclear Waste Disposal in Switzerland

Rony Emmenegger
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Abstract

The deep geological underground has increasingly turned into a site for the projection of energy futures and pasts. This has included plans for dealing with the legacy waste of the nuclear era and for safely disposing nuclear waste in a deep geological repository for the next one million years. Despite an international agreement among experts and decision makers that deep geological disposal provides the safest option, site selection projects have failed worldwide due to local resistance at the surface. Addressing the according tensions between the state, science and society, social scientists have predominantly focused on risk perception, management, governance, ethics and politics in a social sphere. However, they have ignored society-subterranean relations emerging or shifting as disposal projects develop. Filling this gap, this paper studies the ongoing scientific exploration of the deep geological underground that concretizes the site selection process in Switzerland. Based on document analysis and ethnographic research, it scrutinizes how the underground is represented in geological maps and models, and how it is enacted in practices and performances of science communication directed towards the public. It demonstrates how the geological underground is brought into being as a stable stratigraphic layering in which techno-scientific interventions appear feasible and legitimate. In parallel, it reveals how human and geological agency can disrupts such political stabilizations in the course of the scientific underground exploration. On that basis, this paper highlights the inherent fragility of the geological underground as it comes to ‘matter’ in scientific and public controversies about nuclear waste disposal.
Connecting a university-level climate change course with a public climate change speaker series in the U.S. Southwest

Eric Magrane
New Mexico State University, USA

Abstract

I am one of an interdisciplinary group of six faculty members teaching a new team-taught course at New Mexico State University called “Communicating Global Climate Change.” In the intimate honors course, we are exploring a range of approaches to understanding, communicating, and representing climate change, drawing on the multiple disciplines and practices of collaborating faculty. We began the semester by asking students to write a story or description in which they imagined the year 2100 as a time when we had adequately mitigated and/or adapted to the climate crisis. Foregrounding this assignment helped us set a tone that we hoped would foster collective action and practice and the importance of story and imagination in building just and sustainable futures in our U.S./Mexico borderlands and beyond. The class complements a public climate change speaker series that we have run since 2018 that has featured more than 25 speakers (for the first years we often held this series at a local historic off-campus theater to reach a broad public audience; in the last two years many events have been over Zoom). As a key part of the course, we have asked students to propose future speakers they would like to invite, to help shape the series moving forward. In this presentation, I will reflect on the course as an attempt to open new spaces to empower, learn with and from, and build solidarities between college students and faculty, in turn helping shape climate discourse and action in our community.
The Locus Charter and Ethics within GIScience

Nick Bearman
Geospatial Training Solutions, UK. University College London, UK

Abstract

Responsible data use is key to many professionals and academics, not just in GIScience. The advent of GDPR has crystalised the focus on data privacy from an individuals point of view, and the Locus Charter expands this to include ethics from a GIScience professionals point of view.

The Locus Charter (2021) is a set of proposed common international principles to support responsible practice when working with location data. It was developed by the Benchmark and EthicalGEO initiatives, and released in 2021. The idea is to provide a framework of principles to help understand and manage the potential risks of working with location data. There are no rules or laws, but it is an approach to working with location data, to help people who want to do the right thing work with data in the right way. It can be used as a checklist of things to think about and as a conversation starter to talk about ethics in using location data.

The Locus Charter is a great starting point, but there are several questions about how it is practically implemented by GIScience professionals and academics. Specht (2021) highlights a number of limitations in terms of the practical application. I will report on how these have been addressed, including the Ordnance Survey Workshop on Practical GeoAI Ethics in June, and other related discussions.
Subterranean Wasteworls: Carbon Control and the rise of ‘clean oil’

Pauline Destrée
University of St Andrews, UK

Abstract

Global decarbonization efforts and imperatives to transition to low-carbon economies have put into question the role of oil and gas extraction in fuelling our energy systems. In a context of changing shareholder values about environmental sustainability and climate risk, decarbonization has emerged as a new mode of ‘sustainable’ extraction for the oil and gas industry – adopting targets to net-zero in the production of ‘carbon-neutral hydrocarbons’ through various techniques of environmental control and mitigation. In this paper, I describe how environmental technologies of carbon control in the oil and gas industry in Ghana seek to make oil production responsible and sustainable by making it ‘clean’. Delving into the ‘infrastructural guts’ of the industry (Appel, Mason and Watts 2015:4), I describe how waste and its management in the oilfields mediate between subterranean imaginaries of extraction and terrestrial logistics of environmental pollution and protection. Based on ethnographic fieldwork at an oilfield waste management and oil spill prevention site in Takoradi, Ghana, I argue that technologies and practices of ‘carbon control’ (such as oil waste remediation, chemical testing and analysis, dispersion modelling) sustain subterranean extraction while projecting new imaginaries of protection and exposure. Contributing to recent debates about the need to situate and interrogate normative calls for decarbonization, the paper explores the rise of an ‘extractive environmentalism’ in the fossil fuel industry as a new mode of subterranean extraction at a time of global environmental crisis.
PAYING FOR HOUSING, PAYING FOR SEX: EXPLORING THE MISSING INTERSECTIONS OF HOUSING STRUGGLES AND SEX WORK

Daniela Morpurgo
Politecnico di Torino, Italy

Abstract

In this short intervention I will introduce my role in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. In particular my research explores what the experiences of sex workers in Italy can disclose about the materiality (market, accessibility, regulation) and significance (as a place of solidarity, struggle, care) of housing. In fact, literature on housing and inhabitation seems, so far, to be bluntly unaware of the specificity of sex workers experiences. When studies mention prostitution, it occurs mostly in a casual, unproblematised manner, as proxy for poverty, degradation or marginality; as if nothing could be learned from sex workers voices. This is a myopic understanding needs to be challenged. The sex worker, as one among the most stigmatized figures in present times, embodies a number of levels of disadvantage which consistently vary depending from her (his/they) class, race, gender, sexual orientation. Such a specific positionality, as well as the complexity of public-private geographies within which sex workers operates, deserves to be more closely considered.
Don't just measure the easy stuff: An exploration into the practical side of ethics in research, and how we can improve privacy in computer vision analysis in the geospatial domain

Tim Rodaway
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

In recent years, the Internet of Things has seen a massive boom, especially with sensors monitoring various aspects of our lives. This ranges from building management system, to external air quality sensors, with sensors such as CCTV being endemic in the modern day built environment.

Using CCTV as a geospatial sensor enables us to capture human-level information from the built environment including footfall, dwell times, desire-lines, capacity monitoring and social-distancing. This information is critical to understanding infrastructure and policy at the human-level but it is fundamental that the privacy of those being monitored is protected.

This presentation will discuss two sides of the issues; firstly we will assess the practical landscape of governance and ethics issues that need addressing to improve implementation of people movement monitoring, with a particular focus on its usage within research. This includes ethical review processes and data protection impact assessments, and the rules and guidelines that exist, such as UK GDPR and the Locus Charter.

Secondly, we will explore how we can improve privacy and social acceptance when monitoring people movement, focusing mainly on computer vision analysis. This shall cover multiple points in the processing pipeline, from the manipulation of images to remove identifiable information in the data collection and processing steps, to how pose-estimation can be used as a substitute for personal data in front-end visualisations.
Fossilized futures? Uncovering past materialities and imaginaries of oil and gas in the UK

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Abstract

Spaces of fossil fuel production, processing and transportation, are simultaneously material and social phenomena that implicate a range of societal actors, across local to national scales. These actors reflect different cultural and political allegiances to fossil fuel resources and have differentiated abilities to shape the futures of these spaces. However, existing infrastructures for fossil fuel development and consumption can enable and/or constrain the scope of visions of energy futures. Drawing on the case of the UK, where offshore oil and gas extraction has been part of the economy for half a century, and where there is now an increasingly intensive debate on the future of offshore extraction, this paper investigates how past materialities of oil and gas assemblages shape imaginaries of energy futures in the context of decarbonization. We provide a theoretical contribution to the conceptual conversation between research on materialities and sociotechnical imaginaries. Thinking through the case of both offshore oil and gas, which implicate different materialities of both the energy source itself and the required infrastructure, we show how these materialities condition and reshape visions for possible futures. Through archival research and interviews, we interrogate material barriers and enablers for imagining energy futures in spaces historically shaped by oil and gas by tracing the historical development of imaginaries of the UK Continental Shelf since the beginning of its development after the Second World War. It provides the groundwork to then examine how these past visions shape current debates on energy futures in the North Sea.
Unearthing the Underground Imaginaries of (Post)Industrial Places

Erin Roberts
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

The transition to a low-carbon energy system so far has been presented as a historical break from an extractive “subterranean energy regime” (Huber & McCarthy, 2017). Yet, a (re)turn to subsurface resources is increasingly recognised not only as a potential means of sating societal demand for energy whilst realising net-zero commitments, but also as a means of revitalising (post)industrial places long reliant on fossil fuels. While numerous studies have examined how publics perceive low-carbon technologies above ground, little is known about the ways in which people view them in a subterranean context, and how these conceptions relate to environmental values and ideas about environmental change. In this paper, we compare public responses/concerns to proposed subterranean energy interventions at two case sites: an offshore Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) facility connected to a large coal-biomass co-firing plant in the north of England, and a Geothermal (mine water) District Heating scheme in an ex-mining community in south Wales. Drawing on insights gleaned from interviews and focus groups, we highlight how perceptions of these novel underground technologies are mediated by varying cultural representations, degrees of familiarity, moral stories and narrated experiences- all intimately bound to the historical context at each case site.
Exploring regional and geodemographics’ variability of out-of-home beverage consumption preferences in the UK

Jason Tang
University College London, UK

Abstract

Objective: While the majority of food is consumed at home, food consumed away from home plays a significant role in diets and has been linked to increased energy intake and body weight. Apart from prepared meals, little is known about the foods that people purchase outside of the home and where they purchase them. Because population health varies by geography, in addition to trends and socioeconomic inequalities in eating behaviour, geographic differences should be monitored. This study explored and attempted to contextualise out-of-home purchases by food group, store type and channel-category association in relation to the existing regional and geodemographic classifications.

Data & Methods: This paper explored a novel data source from a nationally consumer panel on non-alcoholic beverages from Kantar Worldpanel, collected over a one-year period in 2017 from 30,020 households. First, we showed that the households’ composition and transaction history are broadly comparable to the existing regional and geodemographic classifications. Second, we proposed a modified Apriori algorithm that leverage historical transaction history data with spatial context for identifying large and significant of channel-category association across geodemographics and regional systems.

Findings: As these data have been particularly hard to obtain for academic research, these results offer unique insights into the dynamics of and inaccuracies within a commercial dataset. Furthermore, the results found that both urban differences and shopping missions were affected patronage decision. The proposed approach and findings of this study can help to support decisions about the spatial pattern of out-of-home consumption by augmenting transaction history with existing spatial classifications.
Making, slowly, as method: piecing together creative and collaborative fieldwork

Laura Pottinger
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

‘Making’ is often understood as a process of connecting – ideas, materials, and people - requiring active involvement in a community and environment. In particular, the steady, repetitive and reparative qualities of slow textile making are celebrated by practitioners who endorse its mindful dimensions and encourage careful deliberation around the provenance and use of natural materials. Textile production has widespread environmental impacts, however, evident in the material waste legacies of soil and water pollution. Using natural dyes instead of synthetic preparations creates new intimacies with living materials, highlighting the biodiversity of local places and polluting risks of conventional fabric production.

This paper draws on early insights from extended, slowly paced research with natural dyers - professional designers and artists, growers, and enthusiastic amateurs - in the North West of England. Drawing on ethnographic and auto-ethnographic methods centred around ‘making together’ with practitioners and participants, this research considers the potentials of natural dyeing for facilitating social connection, individual wellbeing and environmental care. I draw on emerging ideas about ‘patchwork ethnography’, an approach mobilising the often multi-sited, fragmented, non-linear character of ethnographic research in practice, and recognising fieldwork as intricately shaped by researchers’ everyday lives and commitments. In doing so, the paper thinks about the opportunities and challenges inherent within making, slowly, as method. Sharing initial findings and thoughts emerging from the first year of a six-year study, I ask, how can metaphors and practices of patchworking, piecing, and stitching together be extended to think about interdisciplinary, immersive, creative methodologies and fieldwork?
The geodemographic provenance of historical telephone directories

Nikki Tanu, Maurizio Gibin, Paul Longley
University College London, UK

Abstract

This paper discusses the provenance of, and challenges associated with, using archival telephone directory data to understand historical demography and socioeconomic patterning. A then-novel innovation, fixed line telephony was adopted only by typically higher echelons in British society and therefore does not enable representative analysis of its population. Nonetheless, these directories provide new historical data about population segments that had telephone subscriptions and are comparable to baseline population records from the censuses, using the family names and addresses present in both sources. Taken together, this develops a picture of innovation adoption in Britain as subscription to the growing telephone network steadily increased beginning the late 19th century. Moreover, the annual frequency at which telephone directory records were updated also potentially facilitate more temporally granular analyses of social change and residential mobility than census data alone.

We compare family group representation (as indicated by surnames) in the censuses from 1881 through 1911 with their contemporaneous telephone directories. Here, family names act as tokens of regional origins and observed social circumstances (as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) today. Further analyses of trends between 1921 and 1961 are used to extrapolate findings to more recent times and to chart the changing social selectivity of domestic telephone subscriptions. Our conclusions discuss the value of observed inequalities in telephone subscription as a harbinger of observed spatial and socioeconomic inequalities today. This research thus seeks to quantify the representativeness of historical telephone directories by comparing subscribers to the resident population and its socioeconomic characteristics.
Negotiating belonging: Resilience, strategies and dreams of refugee families in Tyneside.

Melisa Maida
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

In the UK, refugee and asylum-seeking families navigate increasingly restrictive immigration and asylum policies and complex and lengthy bureaucratic legal procedures. Mountz claims that these aggressive state-tactics make seeking asylum more difficult and traumatic (2017). Furthermore, refugee families often carry with them traumatic pasts, memories of precarious journeys and experiences of protracted precarity and uncertainty. And yet, whilst navigating bureaucratic violence, enforced destitution and everyday rejections in a new, unfamiliar and sometimes hostile terrain, refugees are never passive victims. They strategise and work hard to restructure a sense of autonomy and imagine futures of belonging. This paper is based on 12 months of (ongoing) ethnographic work and in-depth interviews with refugee communities in the Tyneside region of England, a region marked by its whiteness and deprivation which has been receiving asylum seekers since the implementation of the UK dispersal policy in 1999 (Casla, 2018; Nayak, 2017). I explore the strategies that refugee and asylum-seeking families deploy to deal and negotiate with an increasingly hostile environment in the UK and consider the resilience and collectivity required to survive and enact a sense of belonging. This paper also considers refugee families imagined plans and dreams of a place when they are free to govern their own futures. This paper argues that this refugee resilience, their ability to strategise and dream of a better future enables them to develop a sense of belonging and ownership in a new space.
International experience of policy, regulatory and societal aspects of deploying aquifer thermal energy storage

Richard Hanna, Lorenzo Di Lucia, Yiannis Kountouris
Imperial College London, UK

Abstract

Aquifer Thermal Energy Storage (ATES) is a type of geothermal seasonal energy storage that has the potential to deliver large capacity heating and cooling with high efficiency and be deployed with renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. ATES is a key candidate technology for large-scale decarbonisation of heating and cooling in the UK, because there are suitable aquifers beneath numerous large urban and industrial centres. However, uptake of ATES in the UK is low, with just a dozen projects implemented since 2006. Holland had >2500 ATES installations as of 2018, representing around 85% of all installed ATES systems worldwide, followed by Sweden (220 installed systems). In contrast, the US and Canada were active in research and development into ATES in the 1970s and 1980s, but subsequently appear to have ‘lost interest’ in the technology, and currently have very few installations. Key barriers to the wider adoption of ATES include a lack of experience and low public awareness of heat pumps and geothermal technologies in general.

This presentation will report findings from a systematic review of the international experience of ATES for heating and cooling relating to policy, regulatory and societal barriers to uptake, and approaches to address these barriers, including through responsible innovation and encouraging proactive, social desirability in the implementation of ATES. In particular, the review contrasts strategies and experience in countries which lead the market on ATES with other countries which carried out early research into the technology but have since discontinued their interest in ATES.
Which factors help institutionalise climate action in municipalities? Findings from a survey in Germany.

Sven Alsheimer\textsuperscript{1,2}, Elisabeth Dütschke\textsuperscript{1}, Joachim Schleich\textsuperscript{1,3,4}

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Abstract

Limiting global average temperatures to 1.5 °C above preindustrial levels is recognized as a multi-level governance challenge that requires a collaborative effort of actors at multiple scales, including the local level. Institutionalising climate action in municipalities is expected to facilitate actual implementation of the respective policies. In this paper, we empirically investigate factors supporting the institutionalisation of municipal climate action. Empirically, we measure institutionalisation via four indicators: whether municipalities adopted a climate action plan, whether they have a CO\textsubscript{2}-emission target, whether they monitor CO\textsubscript{2}-emissions, and whether they created a specific budget for climate action. Our study relies on a survey of 550 municipalities in Germany with 5,000 to 500,000 inhabitants.

The findings of our econometric analysis suggest that for all four indicators, institutionalisation is higher for municipalities which share climate-related information with other multi-level governance actors in a horizontal dimension. In addition, for three indicators, it is also higher when climate action tasks are allocated within the local administration in a central or integrative way. In comparison, we find no evidence that institutionalisation of municipal climate action is related with municipalities sharing climate-related information with superordinate levels of government, with the pressure to act exerted by local actors, or with the party affiliation of the mayor. Electoral results for the Green Party were positively and statistically significantly related with one indicator only, i.e. target setting. Finally, we find some (weak) evidence that institutionalisation of municipal climate action is related with projected future climate impacts on the municipality and with structural factors such as size and employment rates.
Interlinkages of Politics, Sports and Land: Case of Mumbai Metropolitan Region

Balbir Aulakh
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India

Abstract

Today, urban transformations and urban spaces are produced at different scales and often in contradictory ways. As land becomes a focus for analysing capital, socio-cultural, ecological and political questions, various patterns emerge in how these transformations shape and get shaped over time and space. This study attempts to capture different types of urban transformations in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region; beginning with the primary question of: ‘What changes have emerged in the way sports (and land for the same) are used and mediated by politics and what does this reveal about urban transformation in Mumbai Metropolitan Region?’. Using the Extended Case Method, these transformations are studied through specific places in the region 1.) Dharavi, 2.) Parel and 3.) Mumbra. The study's findings present how contradictory urban processes are (scale, use, stages, organisation, etc.) taking place within MMR at the same time and reflect simultaneity in different systems that transform land, politics and sports in the region. Through this study, the researcher has attempted to capture the various discussions that bring together politics-sports-land to understand and capture these contradictions in the way everyday spaces are inhabited. By studying specific sites over time and space, the study discusses - when compared to each other what do these cases reveal about macrostructures and forces and, at the same time, the micro-processes that characterise these spaces.
(Self)recovering beyond European asylum regimes

Louis Vuilleumier
University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Abstract

Due to increasing restrictive border regimes, the journey of migrants trying to reach Europe has become longer and more dangerous over the past decade. From prolonged immobility to near-to-death experiences, their ordeal is sprinkled with traumatic events. Once enter in European asylum regimes, the semi-legal limbo of their legal situation implies protracted uncertainty, enduring unemployment, and social immobilization. Moreover, welfare state supports are temporary limited, letting the migrants left alone to find solutions on their own, regardless of the progress of their asylum process. Long-term illegalization has pervasive implications in the life project of people on the move, however, illegalized migrants find ways to navigate such spatio-temporal dispossession. Drawing on a multi-sited fieldwork in Europe, I use biographical interviews to explore the evolutions and bifurcations of the trajectory of a population made illegal. In this paper, I explore how illegalized migrants make sense of their prolonged illegalization and which strategies are elaborated to appropriate, shape, and facilitate their (self)care and (self)recovery imaginaries. Rather than romanticized (self)recovery, this paper offers an ethnographic analysis of the capacities of an illegalized population able to regain control over their life despite a hostile environment.
Tidal Anthropocenes: imagining planetary change in the ebb and flood

Aurora Fredriksen
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

In the liminal zones of seacoasts, the Anthropocene comes ‘down to earth’ (cf. Latour 2018), making global environmental changes legible in the intensifying forms of coastal erosion and flooding caused by rising seas, as well as through the accumulation of plastic waste on beaches and the alarming signalling of biodiversity crisis through mass cetacean beaching events and toxic algal blooms. But while events like severe storms and mass beachings demand attention, they also lend themselves to an imaginary of the extra-ordinary, exceptions to the ongoingness of coastal life and livelihoods, despite their increasing frequency. Seeking to understand the Anthropocene as also ordinary, in this paper I shift the focus from coastal disasters to the everyday and less-than-planetary moments where epochal environmental shifts flicker into view, where they are sensed or lived through, or where they come together in the flow of ordinary practices and ways of knowing and relating in coastal places (Stewart 2007). I explore such ordinary moments of planetary trouble through a series of research encounters in and around Nova Scotia’s Bay of Fundy, presented here through both narrative form and short clips of film from the field. The stories contained in these encounters move in divergent directions, shifting spatial scales and temporal orientations. Yet they also cohere, each speaking to wider imaginaries of tidal coasts under threat, each unsettling universalising global imaginaries of coastal change in the Anthropocene through their shared locatedness in the ebb and flood of the Bay of Fundy’s tides.
Exploring perception spillover: fracking controversy impacts public perceptions of other underground technologies

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Abstract

The energy transition has seldom been higher on the public and political agenda. The impacts of the pandemic, the gas price crisis, the war in Ukraine, and the climate emergency, have brought the energy choices ahead into sharp focus. Some now argue that the UK should renew its pursuit of onshore fracturing (‘fracking’) for unconventional oil and gas, even whilst exploratory wells undergo permanent closure. We argue that a crucial, yet understudied, feature of the fracking debate was the impact on public perceptions of other technologies, which we term “perception spillover”. In particular, evidence from Switzerland suggests that fracking may negatively impact public perceptions of other techniques involving the underground, such as geothermal energy.

We present a mixed-methods study into perception spillover arising from the controversy over fracking, and impacting novel renewable energy technologies. Spillover is multi-faceted, and we conceptualise and analyse spontaneous, prompted and primed forms. Using a nationally-representative UK survey (n=927) and two focus groups (n=13), we present multiple lines of evidence that perception spillover from fracking could lead to widespread negative perceptions of deep geothermal energy. Fracking is widely used as an example of the types of unpredictable and potentially irreversible risks that may arise when dealing with the deep underground. ‘Shallow’ geothermal does not experience spillover in the same way. For comparison, we also looked at ‘green’ hydrogen from electrolysis, a renewable energy technique without an underground component, and found that perception spillover can act to attenuate risk perceptions for technologies deemed to be dissimilar.
Utilising geothermal energy to decarbonise heat networks in the UK: the opportunity for mine water heat in Yorkshire

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Abstract

The UK Government released its ‘Heat and Buildings Strategy’ in October 2021 which brings together its work on energy efficiency and clean heat, to provide the foundations for Net Zero buildings in the UK by 2050 (BEIS 2021). A mix of technologies will be required to decarbonise heating in the UK, including the take up and implementation of heat pumps, heat networks and switching from natural gas to hydrogen. There is a tremendous opportunity to decarbonise heat networks using geothermal heat recovery and thermal storage from abandoned coal mines flooded with groundwater (Monaghan et al 2021; Northeast LEP 2021).

While the geological and engineering expertise exists to create these types of energy projects, the UK lacks the policy and governance frameworks to support and finance such schemes, and integrate them successfully into national and local energy networks (Rattle et al 2020). This paper presents the result of a recent research project at the University of Leeds that explored the feasibility for the development of a heat network using mine water energy within a proposed large village environment in North Yorkshire.

Our findings highlight the need for a mix of rules, regulations, standards and incentives (see e.g. BEIS 2021), which would: provide policy support for heat networks in certain contexts over other less carbon effective technologies; improve consumer protection through regulation, e.g. building regulations and standardisation; grow supply chains and upskill the workforce; attract private investment; develop a regional framework for heat network infrastructure development; and use a place-based approach to assess and evaluate suitability of local heat networks and potential natural heat sources from public data.
Public engagements with induced seismicity: lessons for geothermal energy in the UK’s net-zero transition

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Abstract

The UK net-zero energy transition is driving research on the prospects and risks of new subsurface energy technologies (e.g. Evensen et al. 2019, Szolucha 2019, Williams and Sovacool 2019, 2020). However, as exemplified by the government’s moratorium on hydraulic fracturing for shale gas, complex underground processes such as induced seismicity often exceed scientific predictions, undermining efforts to secure a social license for the industry. This paper reports on pilot research aimed at identifying lessons from fracking-induced seismicity for new geo-energy controversies, with a specific focus on enhanced geothermal systems (EGS).

The failure of fracking showed how simplistic representations of the subsurface may conceal substantial scientific uncertainties. When earth tremors persisted irrespective of stringent regulations and suspensions, public resistance to fracking escalated. Controversies around induced seismicity affirmed the key tenet of Science and Technology Studies: that regarding the public as misinformed and deficient of scientific understanding is ineffective in addressing such controversies (e.g. Jasanoff and Kim 2009).

With a number of projects at the exploratory stage, EGS are a potentially significant prospect in Cornwall, South West England. However, EGS also produce earthquakes that may cause controversies similar to fracking. I argue that while tensions around induced seismic events may grow insofar as they are experienced, the promotion of geoscientific ‘literacy’ masks deeper concerns around the distribution of benefits and risks of geothermal projects. Together with engaging alternative forms of knowledge and first-hand experiences of subsurface events, seismic risk mitigation must form part of a just social contract between operators and communities.
Understanding Underground Energy & Seismicity in the UK: Place, Risk Perception & Regulation of the Subsurface

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Abstract

Underground energy interventions are an important aspect of UK history, particularly in terms of former coal mining regions. In many of these same areas, new underground interventions—such as shale gas and geothermal energy—have been proposed. While receiving mixed support across the UK, a key aspect of both is their potential to induce seismic activity.

While subsidence is a common underground problem in the UK, natural (tectonic) seismic events strong enough to be felt above ground are relatively rare compared to other areas of the world (i.e. Japan, Western US). Still, they do occur. Yet, it remains unclear the degree to which concerns around seismicity may differ depending on the source. In addition, there is a lack of uniform regulatory guidelines for practices that induce seismicity.

In this presentation, we draw on mixed-methods data collected across three UKRI UK Unconventional Hydrocarbons projects to demonstrate how different types of seismic events in the UK are perceived, reported and regulated differently. In addition, we highlight the degree to which both place and politics are important in the context of public risk perceptions and responses to induced seismicity and its perceived potential impacts.

To do this, we combine data from social media, citizen science felt reports, longitudinal surveys, and ethnographic research in proposed shale and geothermal energy sites. Our central interest in this research project is to inform decisions (e.g., by British Geological Survey (BGS), Coal Authority, etc.) relating to communication about, regulation of, and engagement on future subsurface energy developments, such as geothermal or carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects.
The MOF4AIR European project: A transnational examination of the determinants of social acceptance of CO2 capture, transport and storage infrastructure

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Abstract

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is the method of capturing CO2 from power or heavy industry operations and redirecting it to long-term geological storage systems, facilitating this way the efforts towards climate change control. Still, the technology remains in dispute, often encountering local opposition when it comes to approving individual projects. Thus, social acceptance is an essential aspect of the further development and diffusion of the technology. Against this background, the MOF4AIR (Metal Organic Frameworks for Carbon Dioxide Adsorption in Power Production and Energy Intensive Industries) European project incorporates particular activities relevant to the analysis of CCS-related social issues.

In this context, a quantitative survey has been carried out (January 2022; total sample size: 1750) in seven European countries (Belgium, France, Norway, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and United Kingdom), examining the factors affecting sociopolitical and local acceptance of CCS facilities, including a) CCS, climate change and CO2 knowledge, b) prior experience, c) benefit and risk perceptions, d) fairness (procedural/distributional), e) trust of relevant stakeholders, f) place attachment, g) engagement activities, h) self-perceived environmental behavior, i) technology optimism, and j) demographic characteristics.

The innovative aspects of this work, in comparison to previous research on CCS, consist of a transnational comparison; a comparison between the different steps of the CCS process (capture, transfer, storage); a comparison between sociopolitical and local acceptance; and a special focus on factors that have not been extensively examined yet in relation to CCS (such as engagement activities and fairness).

The results of the present work will be utilized for the development of public engagement scenarios that can assist decision-makers and project developers/operators to plan customized public awareness and engagement activities towards the acceptance of the different types of CCS infrastructure.
The creative urban ecosystem of fashion and its research in the Polish context

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Abstract

Using the example of Krakow - the second largest Polish city, considered a hub of fashion education, independent fashion design, and consumption of new and vintage fashion - the paper will explore the myriad of actors and connections present in the contemporary urban ecosystem of fashion. Proposing a definition of a fashion ecosystem, it will interpret the results of 30 interviews with different actors interacting in the field of fashion such as independent fashion designers and small fashion firms, showrooms, concepts stores and independent fashion shops, local garment producers, clothing and sewing oriented services and fashion leisure spaces, fashion schools, B2B fashion fairs and their participants conducted in 2020-2022. Their preliminary analysis reveals a complex network of connections between diverse fashion creators, producers, their suppliers and customers who become more than clients functioning as active and interconnected participants in the creative and experience economy interacting in particular spaces. Further exploration of the issue will involve a spatial analysis of these links using the results of an original field mapping of fashion phenomena in the broadly understood central part of the city. It will allow us to pinpoint hotspots and fashion-oriented specialisations of particular parts of the city with respect to specific fashion types and activities. In addition, while analysing the particular city we will take into account its links with the national and global fashion networks. The study will also aim to uncover changes, tensions and challenges posed to the fashion ecosystem by complex contemporary threats such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
Exploring ecologies and labour in unregulated global value chains

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Abstract

This paper is concerned with the political ecologies of environment and labour in global value chains with high degrees of illicit trade. In chains for mined natural resources, supplies often derive from ‘dark places’, representing harsh labour conditions in artisanal as well as corporate mining. At the same time, increasingly damaging mining and processing of non-renewable resources has led to over-exploitation that has already, and often irrevocably, contributed to local environmental harms, such as erosion, flooding and deforestation. The related social challenges stretch beyond labour conditions in mines to generate vulnerabilities of entire mining communities to climate change; pollution of rivers and drinking water, and ultimately poverty, social injustice and conflict. The paper uses the case of the surprisingly unregulated coloured gemstone industry, building on primary data, and also insight from the extant literature on global value chains, global production networks and political ecology in an attempt to engage with, and contribute to our understanding of, entanglements between nature and the social in highly unregulated chains.
Grassroot artist initiatives as counter-aesthetics of care in old industrial towns: towards alternative narratives

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Abstract

This paper investigates how artistic processes, social innovation and art can transform old industrial towns by renegotiating its cultural-industrial heritage. Empirically it draws on a case study of Rjukan Solarpunk Academy, an art centre and a new school of art for imagined futures initiated by an artist collective based in Rjukan, a company town and UNESCO industrial heritage site in peripheral Norway. This grassroot artist initiative is predicated on Solarpunk: a young emergent, utopian, aesthetic and cultural movement in fiction, fashion, art and activism that aims to move beyond dystopian discourses and symbolism around climate change. Rjukan Solarpunk Academy sprung from Solspeil (2013, Martin Andersen), a public artwork tying together Rjukans industrial and cultural heritage through relational aesthetics. This work has become a successful visitor attraction, but it also contains frictions and negotiations of which story is told. In this grassroot artist initiative creativity is an act (Walia 2019) where art can take a performative approach through participation, audience involvement and, ultimately, community collaboration. According to Freire (1970) cultural action is a systematic and deliberate form of action ‘which operates upon the social structure, either with the objective of preserving that structure or of transforming it’. This paper considers how Rjukan Solarpunk Academy negotiates Rjukan’s cultural-industrial heritage through creativity, experimentation, frictions, care and social learning.

References:


Tales of Sandal Green: Re-imagining place and climate action through storytelling

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Abstract

For this paper, I analyse the role and methods of place-based folks arts and socially engaged practices in offering a space of imagination and ritual – for residents, policy makers, and local authority workers – for evolving and sustaining post-industrial urban communities under climate change. I offer reflection and analysis from the interdisciplinary project, "Community Climate Resilience through Folk Pageantry", funded via the UK Climate Resilience Programme (2020-2023). The project is embedded in the ward of Miles Platting and Newton Heath, working with residents and partners to create a half-day celebration with an approx. 80min scheduled and timed community and climate-themed Pageant at its core, located on a patch called Sandal Green. Miles Platting and Newton Heath is one of the most economically deprived wards in Manchester, previously at the heart of the city’s industrial productivity. Its neighbourhoods have witnessed extreme loss of working class cultural spaces, arts and religious traditions, social housing, infrastructure, and green places for wildlife and people. Political apathy is high. Sandal Green is a patch of land earmarked for development; its grounds already hold the fragments of previous homes torn down. Through storytelling and re-enchantment of place, we aim to foreground site-specific community knowledge and creativity for shaping landscape and environmental decision making.
Using 360 immersive storytelling to amplify children’s voices and engage audiences with the impact of flooding.

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Abstract

The impacts of climate change are already part of many communities’ lived experiences and preparedness is now key to building resilience in the face of climate change related risk.

Globally flood risk is predicted to at least double by 2050. Across the UK approximately 1 in 6 properties are at risk of flooding with risks set to increase significantly in the next few decades.

Our team researched with flood-affected children in order to learn from their experiences and involve them as actors flood risk management (Mort et al, 2018). The work supported the young people to tell their stories and share their insights and ideas about how to manage flood risk in the future.

Building on this work, our most recent project, Flood Stories: Immersive Storytelling for Education and Action, has involved the cocreation of a suite of educational resources based around novel state-of-the-art immersive 360 animation with young people and teachers. This approach allows us to bring to life the real testimonies of children affected by flooding, placing the user in the centre of the child’s world. We show that the videos prompt an empathic response that is highly effective in motivating users to want to know more about the issues raised, as well as creating a sense of solidarity and inspiring them to act.
FUTURE = NOW: Sri Lankan apparel sector workers, CoVID-19 and PPE production

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Abstract

Sri Lankan apparels have conventionally crafted itself a position as a niche and ethical supplier. Its ability to do so stems from a strong legislative basis and socio-development conditions that has surpassed its neighbours and the global South generally. However, the past forty years has witnessed various attempts at weakening protective labour legislation; the very foundations that facilitated ‘Made in Sri Lanka’ synonymous with ethical production. The uneven effects of these detrimental exertions brought to plain sight the underbelly of Sri Lankan apparels during the pandemic. So despite the country’s garment sectors admirable shift to a tripartite agreement of minimum wages - even while on furlough - and move to PPE production with the onset of the pandemic, its workers found themselves on the rough edge. Using written testimonies from women workers from the sector during the pandemic, this paper respond to Sarr’s (2020) provocation that “we profit from the opportunity presented by this crisis to rethink the structure of our economy”. To do this, I use a feminist lens to to both acknowledge the depletion faced by workers and their families, while holding onto their tenacity to claim differently.
Riding the waves: the long experience of the Covid-19 pandemic amongst local food system actors

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic had catastrophic impacts on the UK food system. The impacts on the local food sector were no different and commentators rightly praised the sector for an ability to ‘plug gaps’ when mainstream actors came under intense pressure. The problem with such readings, however, is framing the pandemic as a shock, one-off event. Such characterisations do not reflect lived experience. Trauma associated with the pandemic intensified different forms of uncertainty which many local food actors experience in the struggle to produce good food and good food systems. Using social movement, emotional geographies of care, and emergency literatures to inform the analysis, the paper traces 14 local food business experiences of the pandemic from October 2020 to September 2021. Each completed interviews at the start and end of the process, as well as monthly surveys and diary entries to record their lived experiences. The analysis uses ‘stories from the pandemic’ as a narrative arc, from ‘first wave’ feelings of ‘blind panic’ and ‘growing together’, to a sense of ‘a new normal’ and ‘living with Covid’, to increasing feelings of ‘strain’, ‘uncertainty’, ‘burnout’ and ‘lack of recognition’, to document the emotional geographies of living through the pandemic in multiple forms. It reframes the pandemic as an unfolding ‘event’. By ‘staying with’ our participants through the traumatic turbulent months of 2020-21, we reveal the emotional toll local food system actors experienced as they move increasingly into a third sector community service role.
Between Catharsis and Cynicism: On teaching Geographical Thought as a feminist geographer in India

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Abstract

Teaching Geographical Thought as a feminist geographer trained and located in the Global South has afforded many insights. Teaching about a contested discipline marked by androcentricity and whiteness in a diverse classroom, my aim has been to enable students to feel more connected to the subject. The metacognition teaching the ‘Thought paper’ is also simultaneously microcognitive on at least two levels – the international arena and the shape of the discipline within the country. Through pedagogical practices involving role-play, personalization and performance, students examine their own contexts, draw inferences and make connections to uncover the intersections of gender, caste, region within the landscape of Indian geography. We learn to recognize the persistence of an onto epistemological triad despite the contemporary developments within the discipline. This triad, comprising the prescriptive-positivist - development oriented approach, quantitative methods and policy implications effectively circumcises the critical edge to mainstream human geography in India. At the same time, on the international arena, structural barriers work to deepen knowledge asymmetries and aid the persistence of whiteness often through its intersections with caste (Datta 2020, 2019). This is evident at several instances such as a review process that invalidates our work, safari research, inequalities within collaborative research, politics of citation, representations on diversity panels and selection criteria in HEI. Thus, the experience of teaching Geographical Thought from the margins, can trigger both cynicism and catharsis. Resistance will necessarily involve centering care (Datta and Lund 2018), solidarity and slow scholarship (Mountz et al 2015) in academic praxis.
Evolution of spatial policy approaches after the global financial crisis

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Abstract

The 2008 global financial crisis and its aftermath, growing economic nationalism, and more recently economic instability caused by the COVID pandemic are challenging conventional growth and competitiveness-oriented approaches to development. While alternatives are debated across disciplinary fields, the implications for spatial policy are not yet clear. Are we witnessing the revival of the state and the rise of big government, or rather adjustments of established practices? The existing macro-scale periodisation of spatial planning and governance approaches captures the dominance of a Keynesian-developmentalist era, followed by its break-up and replacement by a neoliberal period based on globalism and growth-oriented spatial policies. However, recent developments suggest that this established ‘Keynesianism to neoliberalism’ narrative appears increasingly incomplete. Renewed political concern about spatial inequalities and ‘left behind’ places in particular in the wake of the global financial crisis raises questions about the suitability of established approaches to spatial development policy and planning. This paper aims to review spatial policy approaches across the Global North over recent decades, seeking to contextualise and position current and emerging frameworks within broader debates on state capitalism and regional policy and planning. The paper assesses the emergence of post-crisis regional policies against pre-2008 approaches and considers whether there are any indications of a return to redistributive policies in response to concerns about spatial inequalities and ‘left behind’ places.
The crisis of pollinator decline: A chronic emergency in search of wider agri-environmental recovery

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Abstract

Recent years have seen extensive public concern about pollinator decline, frequently articulated as a desire to ‘save the bees’. Such attentions prioritise Apis Mellifera - commonly known as the honey bee. While this particular pollinator species has a long history of diverse biophysical challenges, emotive reports of its imminent demise are premature. In contrast, the myriad other pollinator species that underpin our food system and biodiversity are unmonitored, unprotected, and profoundly threatened by industrial agriculture and the climate crisis.

This paper uses archives and interviews to explore the dissonance between beekeepers’ understandings of pollinator health, and wider public and policy responses to pollinator decline. Building on Phillips’ discussions (2020) of more-than-human temporalities, and anticipatory actions surrounding bee health, and Whyte’s work on crisis epistemologies (2021), this paper explores how current responses to bee decline prioritise improved management of pollinators and the agri-environment. This approach supports technocratic responses to decline, deep adaptation, and radical transformation of the agri-environment. In contrast, successfully addressing pollinator decline and associated food systems threats requires fundamental changes to human and interspecies relationships that reflect the true scale of the climate and biodiversity crisis in which they are embedded.
‘Nothing is for free’: Moral perspectives on work and redistribution among Eastern European migrant workers in post-furlough London

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Abstract

A growing literature explores the post-work imaginaries of white collar workers in post-industrial regions of the global North. However, less attention has been paid to migrants’ moral perspectives on work and deservingness; including their support for more radical redistributive programmes such as Universal Basic Income. This paper sketches a moral economy of work and welfare among Romanian, Moldovan and Latvian migrant workers in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and Job Retention Scheme in London. We show that while our interlocutors reproduced racialised and productivist discourses of deservingness as part of their own bid for legitimacy, they also challenged and expanded these discourses through appeals to the moral value of care. These findings raise the question of whether redistributive programmes such as UBI would draw upon broader support through appeals to care, rather than worklessness.
Abstract

One of the most prominent and defining features of the creative and cultural industries (CCI) is their project-based nature (Caves, 2000). Typically, groups of freelancers across different professionals get together and collaborate as one temporary company to deliver the product; afterwards the temporary team splits up. Unsurprisingly, academics produced extensive evidence on how networking is crucial among creative workers and organisations (Holden, 2015; Lee, 2015). Nonetheless, fruitful investigations on workers’ networking often relied on small-sized samples and scope (Blackstone et al., 2016; Rantisi et al., 2006), limiting the breadth and applicability of the findings.

To fill this gap, one UK-wide dataset of resumes has been web scraped from the main networking platform for professionals employed in the performative arts. In particular, the present research focuses on the theatre sector. The depth and breadth of the data allow a detailed description of the network under several valuable perspectives: firstly, the basic topology describes size, density and other features of the whole production network; secondly, the node-level analysis sheds light on both workers’ and organisations’ patterns and behaviours; thirdly, as each production is geo-located, thanks to the venue’s position, considerations on geographical distribution and workers’ mobility are drawn. Finally, the time coordinates included in resumes grants insights into the dynamics and evolution of the network.

The richness of the dataset allows one unprecedented, time- and space-informed investigation of the theatre sector, which sheds light on many of its overlooked dynamics. Moreover, as the theatre worker has been convincingly described as archetypical of the creative worker in general, the conclusions reflect on the extent to which the present findings can be extended to other creative sectors.
Reflections on the teaching of geographical thought in Nigeria: purposes, practices, experiences

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Abstract

‘Geographical thought, theory and methods’ is one of the components of the undergraduate degree programme in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The course is a core course which runs in the first semester of our students in the third year and formal lectures holds two hours in a week. The course aims to investigate the historical changes in geography as an academic discipline. It explores changes in the objects of geographical study, concepts, and philosophical development of geographical knowledge from both the ‘human and physical’ perspectives. The purpose of teaching the history and philosophy of geography is to 1) enable students apply the theories, approaches and methods in geography to the design of their projects; 2) enhance understanding of students about how the discipline of geography is related to and informed by societal needs, problems and scientific processes; give students understanding of how geographical thought and practice have evolved over time; and guide students to conduct research in relation to broad historical discourses and current issues in the discipline. Topics considered in the course include concept of paradigm, disciplinary change in geography (emphasize change in the focus of geographers from location of places to description and explanation), quantitative revolution, theories in geography, critical revolution, concept of space, spatial pattern and process. Students perceive the course as tedious, abstract and have difficulty understanding the strengths and weaknesses of philosophical positions and their relevance to contemporary issues. Lack of books, access to journal articles, and teaching materials make teaching and learning difficult.
Geography’s engagement with philosophy: who have been the most popular philosophers?

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Abstract

Characterising the scope of geographical thought seems like a totalizing task doomed to failure. Yet if we are given the responsibility of teaching others about a discipline, understanding its traditions and trends seems relevant. It is challenging to assess these because the corpus of geographical literature is diverse, and also because its size has recently expanded significantly. New practical opportunities to overcome this challenge are provided by biblio/scientometric methods. For example, with improved indexes, the volume of author citations within a body of literature can prove a crude indication of the reach and persistence of an author’s ideas. Based on analysis of cited references of philosophers across a large sample of Anglophone geography books and journal articles (n=102 229) covering the period 1980-2019, I suggest certain philosophical traditions which have been dominant in the discipline as a whole, whilst recognising that there are markedly different trends in sub-fields of geography. Critical theory, poststructuralism and more recently neo-pragmatism emerge as influential strands of thought. In conclusion, I consider what bearing the story of geography’s engagement with wider philosophical thought has on geography teaching. Engaging with these big ideas goes well beyond league tables of popular philosophers and presents particular learning challenges.
Festivals play an important role in supporting performing arts ecosystems as they bring various festival actors together, including artists, sponsors, audiences and local communities to experience and develop the arts while also having positive socio-economic benefits. Globally, the cultural and creative industries have been hard-hit by COVID-19 as measures to curb the spread of the pandemic resulted in the restriction of work and the shutdown of performance venues and events. Festivals have been one of the sectors most severely impacted by the pandemic. In South Africa, lockdown measures resulted in the widespread cancellation of festivals in 2020 and 2021. Out of the 217 cultural festivals mapped in 2019 for the Future Festivals South Africa research project, 122 managed to continue in 2020 and only 95 went ahead in 2021. This raises concerns over the health of the festival ecosystem in the country and its potential to recover from the negative impacts of COVID-19. The precarity of cultural and creative workers was exposed by the pandemic (Comunian and England, 2020) with many performing artists and technical crews struggling or being unable to earn their livelihoods due to lockdown restrictions.

Using interviews with seven South African cultural festivals, an ecosystem of support amongst festival actors including management teams, artists, sponsors audiences and local communities emerged. The support mechanisms that materialised were multi-directional with the festival actors supporting each other in various ways to adapt to COVID-19. The types of support offered included financial backing and reduced performance fees for festivals, work opportunities that generated an income for artists, supporting each other in the shift to new formats like online festivals, audiences supporting the arts during a difficult time, sparking joy through the arts for audiences and engaging in community arts projects and development. The role of festival organisers has also shifted through their adaptation strategies to COVID-19. They are no longer just gate-keepers who curate festival content, but have also become co-creators who work alongside artists and support them in creating works for online environments, which has been the most common adaptation strategy.
The power of the pølse: Foodscapes, convenience food, and everyday geographies of meat consumption and reduction in Norway

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Abstract

Convenience food is at the heart of contemporary, industrialized, unhealthy and unsustainable food systems. On the provisioning side, convenience food is at the core of capitalist accumulation strategies in food. On the consumption side, it has become weaved into time-squeezed everyday lives and represents easy and accessible meals at home and on the go. In this paper, we investigate the role of convenience in meat consumption and meat reduction, focusing particularly on the hotdog as an epitome of convenience food. In doing so, we draw on in-depth household interviews in four geographical contexts in Norway. We employ the concept of foodscapes to study the spatial intersection between the geographies of food provisioning systems and everyday meat consumption, combined with an analysis of how meat consumption and convenience culture become entwined in and reproduced through specific social practices. The paper analyzes the meaning and materiality of the hotdog, exploring how and why the ‘pølse’ has taken center stage in a wide range of Norwegian eating practices, from national holidays and celebrations to hiking trips and summer barbeques. We end by exploring how the specific materiality of the sausage can contribute to reducing meat consumption.
Informal settlements: a mode of production of habitable land

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Abstract

This paper chronicles the growth process of three peripheral informal settlements in India that developed on land unwanted by the rest of the city in their initial material condition. I argue that informal settlements are a mode of production of habitable land, albeit they often pose significant risks to the residents, who endure them and often pay a heavy price inhabiting these precarious landscapes hoping that these spaces will someday become safe and regularised, and they will be acknowledged as citizens with housing rights.

Khori Gaon, the first settlement, is situated on a post-quarry landscape. These are sites of land degradation, pollution, and ecological deterioration posing a health risk. These geographies often remain abandoned due to the rugged terrain, loss of topsoil, inaccessibility, risks related to landslides and flooding of the pits. Khori Gaon residents turned this degraded landscape into habitable land through their incremental construction even though access remained an issue.

The second settlement, called Baiganwadi, was built upon reclaimed land. Through their piecemeal reclamation tactics, the residents produced land from the lake by dumping garbage and constructing their houses on the landfill site. The residents converted the fluid landscape to terra firma; however, the terrain keeps shifting between stasis and fluidity due to overflowing drains and flooding. Baiganwadi’s residents have gradually converted the area into a functioning neighbourhood; however, most parts are unliveable due to the unhygienic conditions.

Kabbalamma Palya emerged on village common land, which was more or less flat; hence the terrain provided minimum constraint. But the settlement process was affected by the threat of eviction within the context of capitalist development, land acquisitions by the state and land mafia troubles. The residents were able to stand their ground and claim their rights through insurgent practices. Hence, this is another form of production of habitable land, where the vulnerable citizens retained the territory they had claimed, unlike many scenarios where they are displaced. Here habitability is more than fitness for human habitation; it is claiming the right to occupy the land within the context of market-led dispossession.
Healthy diets in low-income households: the capability to eat well

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Abstract

Discourses of healthy eating are typically grounded in discussion of nutrition and what constitutes a healthy diet. In the UK this is manifested in the Eatwell Guide which ‘shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group’ (NHS, 2016), including portions of fruit and vegetables, protein, dairy and calcium, etc.

A common argument for why people might not adopt such recommendations centres on whether they have the skills to cook healthy meals. Thus, the demise of cooking skills is deliberated in policy and academic discourses, particularly in relation to food choices, healthy eating and nutritional intake in low-income households. However, whilst the ‘fascination with the science of nutrition’ is challenged for ignoring ‘the complexities of cooking agency’ (Halkier, 2009), some argue that education empowers households to adopt alternative consumption patterns if based on ‘a wider definition of food literacy’ (Batat et al., 2017).

Frequently low-income households are publicly portrayed as consuming ‘a diet of calorie-laden convenience foods’ (Butler, 2013) and not knowing enough about food and nutrition to buy and prepare healthy food (Elkin, 2013), despite there being little difference in consumption patterns. There is a well-rehearsed political message that poor cooking skills and poor financial management are key reasons why people are accessing food aid in the UK, narratives that explicitly align low cooking skill with low income. Many food aid programmes are predicated on the idea that by addressing this cooking skill deficit, low-income households will eat more healthily.

This paper explores this relationship, examining the factors that influence the practice of healthy eating in low-income households. Using Sen’s Capability Approach as a framework for discussing such dietary interventions, this paper draws on a case study of a ‘Meal in a Bag Scheme’ in Greater Manchester, which specifically aimed to develop people’s skills and passion to cook healthier, cheaper and more sustainable food.
In search of a ‘Social-AQI’: Mapping the limits, access, and community engagement with air pollution data in Delhi.

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Abstract

The urban air pollution data that inform real-time governance decisions are becoming more standardized. The standardization is achieved through indices such as the Air Quality Index (AQI), which measure the levels of specific pollutants in the air. The government uses AQI data for policing individual behaviour and to regulate economic activities that contribute to pollution such as agriculture (crop burning), industry, construction, transportation. The standardization of data means that the urban socio-spatial inequalities are overlooked in the air pollution governance. These specificities have implications both in terms of production of the air pollution problem, as well as citizen engagement or its absence, in its policy resolution.

The paper presents the insight from an ongoing project- Social AQI- led by IIIT-Delhi. The project aimed to identify the barriers to civic engagement with the problem of air pollution, especially in the marginalized neighbourhoods in Delhi. Through the intervention based approach, the project collected hyper-local data through sensors installed in six Delhi neighbourhoods located in Okhla and Najafgarh areas, over a six-month period. The sensor sites included slums, unplanned and unauthorized colonies, urban villages both on the urban periphery (Najafgarh) and within the bustling metropolis (Okhla). The project examined how neighbourhood-level institutions interact with locally acquired AQI data, both in terms of hyper-local production and interpretation.

Based on the findings of ethnographic and survey research, the project concludes that exposure to hyper-local data tends to evoke public attention and civic engagement. Decentralized and low-cost technological interventions raise awareness about air pollution and increase civic participation within communities, which, in turn, make local institutions respond more effectively to the problem. The project also proposes an alternative low-cost Artificial Intelligence (AI) based system to overcome the knowledge and awareness deficits in urban neighbourhoods by localizing and socializing the AQI.
Writing development in the North East: understanding Newcastle’s literary ecology

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Abstract

Drawing on research funded by Newcastle University’s Humanities Research Institute, this paper will start by introducing key features of the city/region’s literary infrastructure in terms informed by recent debates about cultural ecosystems.

Home to the largest concentration of Arts Council England-funded literary organisations outside London, two universities heavily invested in creative writing, local authorities with a long commitment to culture-led regeneration, a host of small-scale organisations focused on literature and a large number of practitioners, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the surrounding area is blessed with a very rich literary ecology. Though these writers and organisations share a common desire to support writing in the region, as the paper will outline, our research (based on a series of interviews with creatives and professionals working in literary organisations) suggests these ambitions don’t always align. Instead, the local context is characterised by inequalities, particularly with regard to funding, profile and influence. The result is that even as the idea of a regional cultural ecology gestures towards a convivial and natural support system, the environment is often more competitive, Darwinian even.

Having outlined its findings, the paper concludes by reflecting on the implications these power dynamics raise for policies and plans aimed at enhancing literary development in the city/region, particularly in relation to a possible application to UNESCO’s Creative Cities Network for a ‘City of Literature’ designation for Newcastle. In the process, by offering a local case study that illuminates the on-the-ground experience of creative collaboration, the discussion will offer insights that speak to the wider debate about cultural ecosystems.
Dietary acculturation or the nutrition transition? A look at food practices of cross-border and internal migrants in Johannesburg, South Africa

Brittany Kesselman
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Abstract

This paper examines dietary change among internal and cross-border migrants in Johannesburg. Examining the types of changes, and the factors that underlie them, is important in the context of high levels of food insecurity and rising levels of obesity and non-communicable diseases. The paper examines changes in food choices, food procurement, food preparation and consumption practices. Using a mix of arts-based methods and interviews, the research gathered data on the childhood and contemporary food practices of two different groups of participants, including both internal and cross-border migrants. The internal migrants came from rural areas in other parts of South Africa, while the cross-border migrants came from Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries in the region. The study indicates that while many dietary changes are the result of necessity—due to unavailability of foods, unaffordability or time constraints—other changes are choices made on the basis of status, taste or convenience. This initial study raises many questions and indicates the need for additional research related to food and nutrition policy and dietary change in the context of a middle-income country in the global south undergoing a nutrition transition.
Teaching Philosophy of Geography: perspectives from the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein campus, South Africa.

Mischka Dunn, Abraham Matamanda  
University of the Free State, South Africa

Abstract

Philosophy for Geographers is the bedrock for undertaking any research project in the Department of Geography. This module is taught to Honours’ students at the University of the Free State on the Bloemfontein Campus, South Africa. It forms the basis for understanding the importance of philosophies, theories, and knowledge pertaining to the history of Geography. The main focus is on conceptualisation of geography and understanding how the discipline has evolved from classical to contemporary geography. Herein, an understanding of its importance for research development is vital. The outcome of this module includes understanding what Geography is, understanding and knowing the history of the discipline, appreciating the influence of different research paradigms on the discipline and briefly exploring the future of the discipline. Students’ participation and involvement in this module is paramount as this module relies on the inputs of students. In-depth class discussions and presentations is the main medium of presenting this module where a focus is on joint-learning and analysis of the existing philosophies. The prescribed readings of this module are from Barnard’s, ‘Conceptions of Geography’ and Higgs and Smith’s, ‘Rethinking Truth’. The module is then concluded with a discussion on the future of Geography in the reading by Nigel Thrift and an article by Rogerson that explores Geography in the ‘new South Africa’.
Becoming an Accomplice in Transnational and Transcontinental Radical Housing Struggles

Ana Vilenica
Politecnico di Torino, Italy

Abstract

In this short intervention, I will introduce my role in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. In particular, I will talk about possibilities of setting up a new agenda for research on transnational organising in and beyond radical housing struggles. I explain my conception of what a researcher-accomplice is, and its significance to transnational and transcontinental organising.
International services on high-speed railways in Europe: system offer or a patchwork?

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Abstract

High-speed railways (HSR) currently represent quite a fast developing transport system in Europe. Although they infrastructurally link more countries together, the development of a comprehensive and international network of high-speed services is not so smooth and effective as some authors believe. The main issue is that the decision to construct and operate HSR has been motivated primarily by various national reasons in many countries, e.g., France, Italy, Germany, or Spain (Albalete and Bel, 2012). Moreover, all these countries evince different geographic conditions and patterns, including population numbers, population distribution, and urbanization levels. These circumstances obviously lead to the gradual development of different approaches to the planning, construction, and operation of HSR (Perl and Goetz, 2015). Consequently, the national roles of HSR within individual countries are more developed than the international ones. Thus, the potential of international HSR is fully appreciated only within the European urban core, where frequent international services connecting large metropolises of Paris, London, Brussels, Amsterdam, Cologne, or Frankfurt are offered to passengers.

We thus think that the potential of a gradually emerging international network of HSR to international transport is yet not fully exploited and resembles somewhat a patchwork than a compact or system offer in Europe. Therefore, this paper aims to systematically research the offer of international high-speed services in Europe to support this opinion. We want to study the spatial patterns of their offer empirically and present their typology based on their operational and geographical features. Moreover, we believe this paper helps to fulfill two different research gaps present in the current geographical research of HSR. Firstly, we move our attention from infrastructural issues to trains/services and their operational characteristics, and secondly, we shift our attention from domestic to international services.
Negotiating Nutritionism: Dietary Practices of the Middle Classes in Guangzhou, China

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Sun Yat-sen University, China

Abstract

While nutritionism adopts quantitative thinking to understand the impact of the intake of specific nutrients on people's health, the production and practice of contextual nutrition knowledge have been neglected. Based on in-depth interviews and the co-cooking method, the study examines how the Chinese urban middle classes negotiate nutritionism ideology and how their nutritional values change in the complex food environment. It finds that the middle classes follow traditional nutritional principles despite the profound impact of nutritionism. The traditional nutritional understandings show embedded “nature-human-food” relationships, which include the cultural belief of “the unity of nature and human” (Tian-ren-he-yi), the visceral experience of good food, and the preference for local food. Furthermore, this study finds that the contradiction between traditional food culture and nutritionism permeates the daily diet of the middle classes and contributes to the restructuring of their nutritional concepts. Rather than becoming a guiding principle that interferes with the biopolitics in urban China, nutritionism has been transformed into a complement and improvement of traditional dietary concepts in the active creation of the middle classes.
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Interconnected histories and experiences of housing precarity

Rayna Rusenko
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Abstract

I introduce my role in the ERC project "Inhabiting Radical Housing" and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. I specialize in excavating imperial and colonial legacies in formal laws and policies addressing housing precarity through archival and ethnographic research. My research, situated in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Tokyo, Japan, explores: how the dynamics of racial capitalism shape individual and collective access to housing; how different forms of housing shape experience in raced, gendered, and ableist ways; and how critiques raised by people engaged in housing struggles challenge normative modern understandings of housing.
Teaching geographic thought through history and emotion

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Abstract

Thought and theory are difficult to teach and learn in any academic discipline, including geography. With the goal of offering reflection on aims, pedagogies and experiences that can help make “geography come alive” (Cresswell 2013 p. 3) we recount two approaches to teaching geographical thought focused on students speaking. In the first case we explore teaching that considers emotion highlighting the case of a university class in China. Class sessions were linked with different emotions and feelings in the unfolding stages of course and class delivery. We document and analyse the process of teaching with emotion through consideration of numerous approaches to the integration of emotion in teaching and observing student responses within individual class sessions and across an entire semester. We find that letting students and the professor speak their feelings helps students see learning challenges as opportunities rather than threats and that affect, including feelings and emotion, are suitable for teaching geographic thought. In the second case we explore a university class in Australia where the approach is teaching through history. The aim here is not to entertain the elusive notion of progress, rather the situatedness of geographical inquiry, knowledge and belief. The situatedness of knowledge is used to reinforce standpoint and the legitimacy of perspective that encourages students to speak their ideas, build confidence, as well as focus and advance their thinking. We find both approaches are suitable for teaching geographic thought and may be applied to other aspects of teaching in the discipline.
Dietary change and geographical imaginations in urban Zimbabwe: intergenerational negotiations around postcolonial foodways

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Abstract

Understandings of urban foodways in Zimbabwe and other African countries have been dominated by food security and nutrition transition frameworks. The focus on material scarcity and measurable health outcomes within these frameworks has often obscured the socio-cultural dimension of foodways as well as the historical and political structures that have shaped, and continue to shape, everyday relationships with food among different groups of urban residents in majority world cities. Addressing these often overlooked aspects, this paper looks at dietary change through the lens of intergenerational contestations over foodways in Chitungwiza, a medium-sized city south of Zimbabwe’s capital Harare. Presenting results of six-month ethnographic fieldwork, this paper explores meanings and practices of food in a postcolonial urban setting using three generational groups – generation X born in the 60s, growing up during colonialism, the born free generation and generation Z, born after 1997 - as a point of departure. Findings show that foodways of the three generations, each having experienced Zimbabwe’s (post-) colonial political economy in different ways, are negotiated through geographical imaginations of rural and urban spaces. Engaging with the question what it means to apply a geographical imagination to dietary change, the paper concludes that, besides the impact of contemporary globalisation, historically situated spatial and socio-ecological relations should also be taken into account in understanding dietary change in majority world cities.
Tomorrow’s foods, today’s practice? Visceral encounters with alternative proteins in everyday life

Johannes Volden
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Abstract

Alternative proteins such as plant-based meat substitutes and edible insects are often proposed as sustainable solutions to conventional meat consumption. The envisioned ‘successes’ of such novel foods is often hypothesized based on quantitative measures of consumers’ attitudes and levels of acceptance, or sensorial interventions in the controlled settings of a virtual or laboratory space. Tasting sessions can be a form of ‘visceral witnessing’ (Sexton et al. 2022) in the encounter with new foods, but they obfuscate the socio-material, cultural, and tempo-spatial contexts of consumption in the relational foodscapes of daily life. Drawing on social practice theories of eating and recent scholarship on the visceral and embodied geographies of food, this paper investigates how established food practices are disrupted, reinforced, and transformed with the emergence of alternative proteins in Norwegian consumers’ daily lives. Applying an innovative qualitative methodology structured around informants’ self-experiments with plant- and insect-based protein foods, the paper searches for the ‘quotidian stories’ (Goodman 2015) of these novel foods, attending to the embodied character of their consumption. By bringing food experimentation outside of the laboratory setting, the study illuminates how alternative proteins become constructed as in/edible in everyday discourse and practice beyond existing attitudinal accounts.
Institutional Bottlenecks and Food System Interdependencies in Pakistan

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Abstract

Global food systems are diverse, complex, and vulnerable to multiple stresses and shocks. While there is a rapidly growing body of research and practice on complex food geographies and food systems, most tend to focus on specific national goals (e.g. food sovereignty), food system outcomes (e.g. food and nutrition security), or on hazards and disruptions (e.g. COVID19) without a consideration of enhancing resilience across the system. Resilience can be enhanced in three ways: robustness (ability to resist disruptions to existing outcomes), recovery (ability to bounce back to prior outcomes), and re-orientation (ability to deliver acceptable alternative outcomes).

The paper presents an approach for systematically analysing vulnerabilities in national food systems by combining theoretical understandings from food geography and food systems, anchored to the three resilience concepts. This is accomplished by a comprehensive analysis of Pakistan’s institutional and regulatory systems with the purpose of examining food system interdependencies and regulatory bottlenecks to resilience and sustainability. The paper critically explores the use and intersection of these key food system concepts in the food geography space with insights from Pakistan.
Exploring dietary interventions: humanitarian procurement and ‘healthy markets’

Jane Midgley
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This paper discusses the work of three international humanitarian organizations and their procurement and supply of specialised nutritional foods/ready to use supplementary and therapeutic foods that are used as dietary interventions to address undernutrition and nutrient-deficiencies during humanitarian emergencies and development programming. Critical research attention has focused on the nutritional or technological fix that these interventions represent. This has led to calls for greater attention to the work of aid organisations and associated power relations and commercial interests of attending to discrete aspects of malnutrition via nutritional interventions that legitimises undernutrition and constructs the hungry as a market, rather than addressing the structural context (i.e. chronic poverty, food systems), and dietary conditions and change more fully (Scott-Smith, 2020; Scrinis, 2020). In response, the paper focuses on the global procurement (identification and sourcing) process as it seeks to fulfil efficient and effective interventions to reveal in more depth the political economic rationales that inform and govern this approach. Informed by interview and published documents the paper discusses the different geographies, technologies and discourses that are enrolled by the agencies and professionals undertaking global procurement and supply of these items, that have become classed as ‘essential commodities’ in humanitarian response.
The ontological politics of kosher consumption practice: between strict orthodoxy and the global market

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Abstract

As the kosher market has expanded globally in recent decades, a plethora of rabbinical authorities and certification bodies have emerged to protect – and project – the boundaries of what is permissible for Jewish consumers. In this paper we explore how, as kosher food has become more widely available in supermarkets and other global food businesses, there has been a concurrent growth in demand for kosher products produced in line with ever more strictly observed kashrus dietary laws. Investigating the ongoing development of kosher production and consumption practice in Manchester in the North of England, we explore how the economic realities and ontological politics underpinning market development are enacted, and what the implications are for dietary change among Jewish consumers and the politics of consumption more generally.
Towards a geography of dietary change: lessons from an international context

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Abstract

Diets and processes of dietary change have received surprisingly little attention from geographical perspectives, yet are increasingly recognised as a critical ‘piece of the puzzle’ in bringing about better global agri-food relations. With diets often conceptualised in narrow or atheoretical terms, here we seek to apply a geographical imagination to understanding contemporary efforts to change and/or shift diets in more positive directions. To ground this exploration, we reflect on an ongoing project to assemble a database of already-existing dietary change initiatives and interventions from around the world. Illuminating the breadth and diversity of these initiatives and interventions, we argue that dominant theoretical frameworks and tendencies do not provide sufficient scope for understanding them, thereby reinforcing knowledge gaps and limiting understandings. In particular, we draw attention to three key themes. Firstly, the matter of scale, from international programmes across entire food systems down to those seeking minor adjustments to micro and macronutrients. Secondly, the different emphases in what —more precisely—is being changed, whether in e.g. the material and nutritional qualities of food, or the social and cultural contexts in which people consume food. Thirdly, we consider questions of politics and responsibility, with a wide range of actors understood and prefigured as the ‘agents of change’ in bringing about better diets. We conclude by drawing out the implications of the database for understanding nascent shifts in the contemporary worlds of food.
Reflecting on the Benefits and Challenges of Online Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in profound disruption to geography higher education. A pivot to online teaching required staff to rapidly adapt their practices to novel learning environments and digital spaces. Whilst many studies have reported the different pedagogic approaches adopted, fewer have evaluated the resultant student learning experience. In this study, we aimed to create an evidence base regarding the benefits and challenges of online learning during the pandemic, reflecting on a suite of pandemic pedagogies adopted within two undergraduate geography programmes in a British university. Adopting a mixed-methods approach of online surveys (105 students) and focus groups (14 students), we explored the benefits of asynchronous and synchronous online learning, and assessment and feedback strategies. We discovered flexibility in student work patterns and use of technology to facilitate engagement in learning. We also identified key challenges for students associated with online learning such as time management, maintaining motivation, engaging in online classes, and feeling part of an online learning community. We identify best practice in relation to online learning so that in the event of any future remote pivot, or with sustained adoption of blended modes of delivery, we can achieve a high-quality student learning experience.
Tenacity of students: bridging the digital connectivity gap

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Abstract

Finding solutions to continuing with Geography through the pandemic, often, quite rightly, focuses on the adaptation of educators in flipping overnight to online teaching and then later to blended approaches throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. We all moved online in 2020, without an opportunity to consider digital connectivity at home. As well as competing demands from household members, the increased pressure on broadband speeds, many areas have limited digital connectivity. Within the United Kingdom context, it is recognised that broadband speeds in non-urban locations are slower than in urban settings and in 2019 the House of Lords found that only 1% of rural premises had broadband speeds of 10mbp/s compared with urbans areas where over 105 of premises had the higher broadband speeds.

Although many assumed The Open University was already online, this was only partly true, and like all other education institutions, all activity moved online in March 2020. For many students, either they no longer had face-to-face teaching or were no longer able to access the internet for their studies at work, library or other public space. As a result, access to teaching materials and tutorials became a limiting factor.

This paper, based on research carried out with over 400 geography students, reflects on their tenacity to continue their distance education studies during the pandemic when their home location faced digital connectivity injustice, usually because of the rural location, and, as a result did always have access to broadband or 4G mobile coverage. The paper will go on to discuss the influence and subsequent impact of this research in supporting students with limited digital connectivity within The Open University’s Access and Participation Plan towards bridging the digital connectivity gap.
Walking as a pedagogical tool in higher education: Moving beyond COVID-19

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Abstract

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many pedagogical lessons have been drawn within higher education. However, the focus remains around digitalisation and distance education. Conversely, walking has been encouraged in everyday life throughout the pandemic, as a means of socialising, increasing health and wellbeing, and within professional environments. Whilst the use of walking as pedagogy method has been promoted within the education of younger children, its use in higher education has yet to be fully explored.

Drawing upon our own experiences of teaching and being taught during the COVID-19 pandemic, and walking methodologies, this conceptual paper will discuss the potential of walking in higher education. We start from the position that walking, as a form of movement, is beneficial to learning, and outlines some of the multifaceted motivations we, as teachers (and students), have for introducing walking as pedagogy within higher education. Within this conceptual paper we explore the conceptualisation of both ‘thinking and walking’ and ‘walking and thinking’, as beneficial to academic learning and wellness respectively. Furthermore, we question whether the geographical context in which walking takes place has an influence on thinking and learning whilst walking. Finally, we offer some suggestions as to how walking pedagogies may be included in post-COVID pedagogies in higher education.
Development risks and salvage in the key to Africa's future

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Abstract

Zimbabwe has 15 million people in total. The capital Harare city council was setup in 1950 pre-independence; systems were designed for 300000 people. Water and energy systems currently cater for 40 percent of the city’s 4.5 million population. 67.7 percent of people live in rural areas, in dry seasons people walk around 10km for drinking water. Section 77 of Zimbabwe’s 2013 constitution focuses on water and electricity. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG6 and SDG7 are essential for socio-economic development and meet the objective of SDG1, eradicating poverty, pivotal to human development. Zimbabwe has insufficient clean water and energy. We propose water-exploration, borehole-drilling in urban and rural areas. Supplying multiple access solar-powered water systems eases water-supply. Community engagement in construction, outreach of materials nationally and from neighbouring countries ensures circular-sustainability. Solar-energy lighting in schools and public spaces; use of solar on geysers for domestic and commercial use has been achieved. Installation of solar-powered boreholes for domestic consumption and supply of solar-powered water systems for farming is ongoing. Sustainable management of water resources; increased access to clean water ensures water-use meets current and future socio-economical/ecological demand. Construction of Blair toilets in rural areas; sewer maintenance in urban areas ensures water resources are not exposed to defecation. With recognition and services supplied to outreached Unit bodies, we anticipate investment in solar and water services. This will ensure a higher percentage of people have food, clean energy; relieving poverty, deforestation and air pollution. Further outreach is projected to spread across Africa.
Moving from ‘feckless food scroungers’ to the ‘deserving poor’: The shifting discourses of food banks and food poverty in UK tabloids during austerity and Covid (2010-2020)

Michael Goodman, Ayse Selcuk
University of Reading, UK

Abstract

Oh what a change a (food) crisis—like that of Covid-19—brings to how we frame and discuss an issue. This paper will analyse and explore the changing framing of food (in)security, food banks and food bank users in three UK right-wing tabloids (i.e. The Sun, The Daily Mail, the Daily Express) starting in 2010 until just after the first Covid lockdown period in 2020. Quantitative analysis shows how food (in)security has shifted in coverage across these tabloids to become more salient and thus, get greater coverage or mentions over time. Qualitative and corpus analysis shows how ‘food scroungers’ getting ‘free food’ from food banks has—during austerity and the first Covid lockdown period—given way to a changed discourse of the ‘deserving’ poor, who, as food bank users, have become embedded in a novel collective narrative of ‘need’ and ‘deservingness’. In particular, and in parallel with the growing focus on Marcus Rashford as a ‘celebrity food poverty’ campaigner, the crisis of Covid starkly shifted earlier tabloid ‘blame’ and ‘shame’ discourses to those of community, resilience and care. This radical shift has meant that tabloids have become a kind of mechanisms of acceptance of food banks and their users, most likely because portions of their audience was forced to use them, the national mood was one of community and care and tabloids didn’t want to be seen to be overtly critical of the Conservative government’s ‘handling’ of Covid. More overtly, these tabloids redefined food insecurity as a condition of ‘need’ rather than one of scandal and embedded with notions of shame and contempt; how long this more ‘progressive’ framing lasts is anyone’s guess, yet this shift is consequential. The paper concludes with a short stab at understanding and conceptualising the implications of this relatively unprecedented shift in the representations of the (food) poor in UK tabloids.
Antifascist particularisms and anticapitalist resistance: Infrastructures, remembrance of past struggles and continuous activism

Felicitas Kuebler
University of Klagenfurt, Austria

Abstract

In 1939, Max Horkheimer famously stated that anybody “has nothing useful to say about fascism who is unwilling to mention capitalism” – his statement is still considered relevant amongst many parts of the radical left, though the assumptions of the linkage between capitalism and fascism and the successive implications for political action differ. Antifascist struggles have therefore often been understood in the context of revolutionary political practice, not only involved in the opposition of the far-right, but also focussed on developing possibilities for utopian social transformation. Considering the Rigaer 94 in Berlin as an example of antifascist (sub)culture, I examine how the struggles against capitalism and fascism inevitably leave traces deeply embedded in the fabric of the city, becoming a part of an infrastructure necessary for any notion of a non-fascist or antifascist life.

The history of antifascism in Berlin dates back to the 1930s. Since then, an infrastructure of countercultural venues, bars, or projects has developed in the city, some of them still used while others were evicted or are under threat to be evicted. Those places not only provide an infrastructure to meet and connect with others, but also serve as symbols of shared memories, counter-hegemonial knowledge and antifascist identity. The Rigaer 94 is an example of a site of antifascist culture as well as a symbol of militant struggle against authoritarianism and capitalism, rendering it an important part of Berlin’s antifascist infrastructure. Drawing on the work of Theodor W. Adorno, I outline a framework that links the situated memories and knowledge associated with the history of the Rigaer 94 with contemporary struggles to understand how the site serves as infrastructure for continued antifascist action by examining it as material, symbolic and cultural resource.
Urban foodsheds and where to go from here: potential future pathways for local and regional food systems research and practice

Kerstin Schreiber
McGill University, Canada

Abstract

Local food systems initiatives promote the expansion of locally embedded food supply chains with the aim to connect local producers with local (urban) consumers, make a region independent from global corporate food supply, and support the local food economy, among other goals. With the growing interest of cities to support re-localization efforts, questions around the feasibility of plans and strategies as well as the physical and social capacity of producers to feed local populations arise.

This presentation centers around some of the production-facing factors that may affect to what degree local food systems can be mobilized and realized. Based on my PhD research, I will reflect on current gaps and opportunities for research and planning and suggest a roadmap for the coming years, covering three themes: mapping the foodshed, planning the foodshed, and sustaining the foodshed. To do so, I will discuss the roles and limitations of foodshed analysis and urban food strategies for planning production-facing aspects of local food systems and present examples from a case study with farmers in the province of Québec selling to local markets to illustrate the need to consider farmer resilience, adaptability, and formal and informal support systems in food system localization efforts.
Ecological Footprint in Local Hectares - Communicating the Impact

Dirk Wascher, Gustavo Arciniegas, Poppy Eyre
Susmetro, Netherlands

Abstract

As part of the EU Horizon 2020 Project FoodSHIFT2030, we apply the interactive Metropolitan Foodscape Planning tool (MFP2.0) to municipalities in different city regions with the goal to raise awareness regarding the land use impact of current food consumption patterns. The method utilizes up-to-date data on European and national/regional land use, crop production, food consumption patterns and both topographic and geo-statistical characteristics of the city region in question. Making use of a GIS-based spatial assessment model that allows analysis of 32 crop types aggregated into 12 major food groups, we can provide both cartographic images and quantitative data of the local ecological footprint of any given diet at a given moment in time for the selected city region. Having communicated the results of MFP2.0 applications at a variety of occasions, such as policy workshops, scientific conferences, university masterclasses and urban living labs with farmers and entrepreneurs, we are in the position to offer a review of different societal response mechanisms and analyse the way the results are being interpreted. Rather than elaborating on the details regarding the MFP methodology and its footprint analysis results – a topic that has been covered in a number of earlier publications – we take a step back to address aspects of impact, communication and perception in the light of political awareness raising regarding the nexus food consumption, sustainability, climate change adaptation, and corresponding policy strategies that allow for food system transition.
Charity as anti/fascist infrastructure: Contested civic architectures of circulation in the UK third sector

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Abstract

This paper considers the conflicting antifascist and fascist-enabling capacities of charity as an infrastructure for the circulation of civic values and resources, drawing on a mixed-method project investigating the interface between charitable activity and the British far right. In recent UK public discourse, charity has become a point of conflict over the meaning and enactment of citizenship, while highlighting uncomfortable continuities between the liberal centre and the foundations of fascist ideology. Substantial bodies of work in geography and beyond have engaged with charity as an infrastructural actor, yet there remains a lack of detailed contemporary consideration of how charity as an ‘architecture’ of civic provision provide material and discursive pathways for struggles between fascism and anti-fascism. In this paper, interviews with charities and far-right activists, documentary analysis of charity and far-right publications, and a UK-wide survey (n=406) of self-described ‘nationalists’, shed light on these points of conflict and continuity. I argue that charities manage and mobilise significant infrastructural capacity for developing forms of potentially deeply meaningful connectivity between people, making them a substantial, if hitherto underestimated, point of conflict and mobilisation for and/or against the far-right. Their position as well-established liberal civic institutions highlights both the importance and limitations of the mundane spaces and ‘quiet politics’ of civil society in antifascist politics. Through this infrastructural ‘gaze’, I argue that, rather than an either/or distinction between physical confrontation and ‘quieter’ civic activisms, a both/and antifascism is both viable and necessary.
Conceptualising automobility and neighbourhood sociality in Urban Design

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Abstract

Donald Appleyard’s 1981 study Livable Streets analysed the relationship between traffic and social interaction on streets in San Francisco. Appleyard found, perhaps unsurprisingly, a negative correlation between the two with those on busier streets knowing their neighbours less well. This frequently cited study helped to give shape and weight to a repeated and long standing concern in urban planning over how the configuration of streets and the consequent mediation of automobility impact urban sociality. From the Radburn principles to New Urbanism in the US, from Dutch woonerf to British ‘Home Zones’, from Ciclovia in Bogota to Play Streets in Bristol, as well as the myriad of road reallocation schemes conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, numerous imaginings of urban street configurations assert and rebuke the negative relationship between automobile circulation and sociality (Marshall 2004). The texture of this sociality itself, however, is less well theorised, summarised in Appleyard’s study, for example, by a metric of friends or acquaintances per person. Taking the call within recent studies of social infrastructure in geography (Latham and Layton 2019, Middleton and Samanani 2021) to attend to the different ‘registers’ or ‘modalities’ of sociality within the sites of urban public life, I propose for this session a critical review of literature on urbanist and urban design practice concerned with mediating automobility through street design. This review will focus on the way street-based sociality in residential urban areas has been conceptualised as a design goal by planners, designers, and activists in transforming current or imagining future urban spaces. If the urban street can and should serve as a social infrastructure (Pryherch 2021), how might this support or complicate these urbanist visions?
Children's Climate Change Engagement through Photovoice: Creative Expression for Youth-led Action

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Abstract

Most studies of children and climate change education focus on instilling literacy (a ‘top-down’ process), positioning children as passive recipients rather than active agents in shaping their lived realities. However, using photovoice, a form of participatory action research, can help explore how children make sense of climate change, while inviting their critical reflection and action (a ‘bottom-up’ process). By qualitatively examining children's photovoice discussions from a fifteen-week after-school program, the present study explores how children made connections between their own lives and climate change through photovoice. Participants were 55 children (ages 10 to 12) who participated in Science, Camera, Action!, a program consisting of hands-on educational activities, photovoice process, and youth-led action across three neighboring cities in the U.S. Data consisted of nine audio-recorded photovoice discussions transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings suggest that photovoice helped children to learn about, care about, and take action on climate change. These processes were interdependent and fueled by children’s enjoyment of the program and children’s engagement in collective meaning-making during group-based photovoice discussions. Photovoice helped facilitate connecting children’s emotions to the topics of climate change as they collaboratively build local action projects. As climate change intensifies, photovoice can be an important pedagogical approach and enjoyable experience for children that simultaneously facilitates their learning, affective engagement, and agentic action.
Collective adaptation in socio-culturally diverse cities - Insights from Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

In many coastal cities around the world coping with and recovering from coastal hazards such as storms, flooding, and erosion are mundane realities since many decades. However, increasing frequencies and intensities of climate-related hazards represent dynamic challenges for urban coastal residents. This holds particularly true for the urban poor, a growing share of the urban population in the course of continuous urbanization. Not only do they mostly live in highly exposed areas, but they also have least capacities to cope with frequently recurring and intensifying climate-related hazards. Left behind or even threatened by state-led risk management and limited in their individual means, collective efforts to cope with disasters are key for them to maintain their livelihoods. While there are studies assessing collective action in the context of climate change, they mostly focus on rural contexts, turning a blind eye on urban settings, which stand out regarding socio-cultural diversity of the population and highly dynamic changes in the social landscape of neighborhoods. Building on social identity and collective action theories in combination with qualitative interview data, this paper uses the example of Jakarta, a highly diverse and flood-exposed city in Southeast Asia, to showcase which social groups form in the face of flood risk and what collective action they take to cope with, recover from and adapt to the threats they face. It finds that social identities play a key role for facilitating collective action. However, the effectiveness of collective measures varies and is influenced by various aspects such as leadership qualities and bridging social capital. Accordingly, this contribution highlights the importance of understanding the links between social identities and adaptation and calls for more research and consideration of this aspect in future adaptation research in order to be able to free yet unused local potentials and sustainably advance urban adaptation.
Neighbourhoods of Interspecies Inhabitation: Everyday Human-Fox Relations in an Inner-City London Street

Tom Fry
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Abstract

This paper argues for an ecologisation of our understanding of the urban neighbourhood. Drawing from ethno-ethological fieldwork of human-fox relations in inner-city London, it argues that current understandings of neighbourhoods as spatial units or felt places marginalise the role of non-humans in their composition. Considering the inner-city neighbourhood via human-fox relations brings forth particular means through which the neighbourhood is generated by the non-human. Firstly, the neighbourhood as place of everyday rhythms is constituted by the practises of fox inhabitation, which carry particular affective intensities across sonic, olfactory and material domains. Secondly, through their mobilities and material imbrication with individual but interconnected gardens foxes rework the spatial formation of the neighbourhood, pulling private gardens, and their ecologies, into the shared domain of neighbourliness. Thirdly, whether through convivial or conflictual human-fox and human-human relations, the neighbourhood as a site of belonging is expanded to include or exclude non-humans, broadening our understanding of the quotidian negotiation of difference in the super-diverse city. These three themes of more-than-human rhythm, space and neighbourly sociality together offer an understanding of neighbourhood as a dynamic, material process of interspecies inhabitation, and in doing so offers a conception of the politics of urban nature as realised in the everyday, routinised and ordinary encounter.
Anticipatory Food and Climate Action: Covid’s Lessons for the Agri-Food System’s Net Zero Transition

Neil Ward
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Abstract

The Covid crisis opened up the scope of plausible state action, unsettling neoliberal ideas about the roles and boundaries of states and markets. The crisis came soon after the UK’s statutory commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with its profound implications for food production, land use and dietary change. Covid helps us look at the climate challenge anew. Drawing on a book-length study, Net Zero, Food and Farming: Climate Change and the UK Agri-Food System (Routledge, 2022), which examines how agri-food futures relate to the past and present, this paper considers the timescales and governmentalities of the agri-food system’s climate crisis in the context of Covid. It analyses the styles, practices and logics through which the future is anticipated and acted upon, and draws lessons for social science, and for science, with respect to engaging with, and making sense of, the ‘net zero transition’ as it relates to food production, consumption and land use.
Recombinant Urbanism: London’s Postcolonial Nature

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Abstract

Through an ethnography of other-than-human denizens in London, this talk recasts the city’s metropolitan nature as postcolonial. It is concerned with the phenomenon of ‘recombinance’: novel relations forged between organisms with no history of co-evolution, and which inhere through a number of intersecting forces. The paper tracks recombinance in three different registers. Firstly, networks of trade that result in the arrival and escape of non-native biota. Secondly, affordances of infrastructure that result in the urbanization of ‘native’ avifauna. And thirdly, commensality, through which novel ecological relations are amplified. Recombinant urbanisms unsettle three staples of urban theory: design, inhabitation and the biopolitics of managing urban life. It prompts new engagements with the politics of urban nature.
Making landscapes’ ‘quite voices’ prominent - creative approaches in the practice of recovery and transformation

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Abstract

In recent years we increasingly witness practices about landscape conservation, protection and management that are fashioned around narratives of ‘nature’ recovery. However, decisions about landscapes and environments are made by humans through convoluted processes of negotiation. Although the participation of diverse participants and integration of knowledge from different perspectives, is often emphasised, the ‘voices’ of landscapes and non-human beings remain ‘quiet’. This paper argues that landscape decision making can never be comprehensive without acknowledging the agency and disruptive and generative forces of the non-human world. Whilst we may not readily acknowledge nature as a decision-maker in the conventional sense, it is nonetheless the case that the more-than-human world is dynamic and acts upon and in landscapes as well it heavily affected by human decisions. Reflecting on current processes of landscape decision, the paper points out that to achieve ecosystems resilience our thinking needs to be less human-centred. It then goes on to argue that creative perspectives can help us reimagine notions of recovery. Art through practice can bring empathy about the natural world in complex and unexpected ways. Through artistic interpretations the ‘quiet voices’ of ecosystems and landscapes can be manipulated, shaped, altered, reproduced, and brought to the fore more effectively. That leads to better understandings, dialogue and potentially surprising transformations. An anthropocentric view of landscape is not inevitable.
Hydro-Heritage for Healing? Examining the Gendered Experience of Water in Post Conflict Swat, Pakistan

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Abstract

Drawing upon a case study of post-conflict Swat valley we expand upon the concept of hydro-heritage to contest the dominant engagement with water as a resource within the discipline of geography. We argue that heritage is relationally produced and specifically focus on the site of springs to explore the affective dimensions of gendered access, experience and utility of springs. The key argument is that springs as heritage can be a conduit for healing in reconnecting with place based enchanted cosmologies. However, in the post-conflict reconstruction and development imaginaries of the Pakistani state, ‘modern water’ occludes the agency of ‘enchanted water’ through springs to create new and gender exclusionary geographies. The people of Swat were traumatized by the Taliban control over their lives and the subsequent war. They are quite mindful of the tensions between development and their traditional ways of life. The loss of springs is yet another manifestation of the erosion of the local scale to be replaced by an alienating national scale.
Seamless transitions or sharp boundaries between home, school and leisure activities: Young people’s formation of ‘a way of life’ in southern Stockholm

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Abstract

This paper examines relations between home, school and leisure activities and young people’s formation of ‘a way of life’. The paper is based on interviews with young people in three different upper-secondary schools in southern Stockholm. Drawing on Bernard Lahire’s ideas of ‘the plural actor’ the analysis underlines how class, ethnicity and gender is reproduced in several spheres of life simultaneously. The analysis shows that young people that possess cultural and economic assets and live in middle-class neighborhoods with ease move between different spheres of everyday life. To choose an upper-secondary school outside the neighborhood of residence enables this group of students to both have old and new friends, and to initiate social contacts between group of friends. This results in a social capital and a feeling of ‘room to maneuver’ both in the city and in life. For other interviewees who possess a cultural capital, living in a socially disadvantaged neighborhood, the different social spheres in life are rather associated to sharp boundaries. Among this group of students ‘a way of life’ is to choose one social environment at the cost of another. In addition, the analysis highlights how the plurality of young people’s lives relates to special interests or passions which create spaces of encounter between young people with different backgrounds and in different neighborhoods.
Round-table discussion. Avenues for food sensitive planning

Esther Sanz Sanz, Kerstin Schreiber, Claude Napoléone

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Abstract

Round-table discussion around the communications presented in the session "Analyzing and mapping proximities of recovery for food sensitive planning" (1) and (2). Further collaborations including a perspective article.
The Urban Macaque in India: Power, Resistance and Negotiation in the Making of Urban Environments in the Global South

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Abstract

Our recent work has been animating the city and posing radical questions on the involvement of the nonhuman across the urban habitus, mobilities, livelihoods, economics, biopolitics and planning in the Indian Anthropocene. In this contribution, we hope to explore the transformative experiences that macaques, one of the most adaptable and evolutionarily successful of all nonhuman primates, appear to be undergoing in modern-day, urban India. We particularly examine modes of macaque inhabitation, mobilities and territorialisation, questioning how macaque bodies and ecologies forge relations with human infrastructural environments, cohabiting with people, but also unsettling the rhythms of the everyday and often posing serious public health and governance concerns. They thus become subject to the biopolitics of socio-spatial inclusions and exclusions from cities, leading to their marginalisation as polluting and disruptive occupants of the urban. In response, however, macaques resist the ordering, partitioning and regulation of their spaces and, as sentient beings, learn to negotiate and inhabit complex, dynamic urban environments and develop occasionally affective relationships with people, comprehending them according to their own knowledges, capabilities and rhythms. What bearings then do our lives, and our often-unfeeling actions, have on the lifeworlds of macaques and how can deeper understandings of these shared lifeworlds contribute to a recasting of our own perspectives, prejudices and practices, especially in the urban Global South of the future?

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Abstract

The paper intends to purpose some of the reflections that emerged from the ethnographic research carried out on board of three Search and Rescue ships in the Central Mediterranean between 2019 and 2021, as part of the PhD course in anthropology at the University of Turin.

The paper has three objectives. First, to briefly outline the process that led grass-root NGOs and associations to act in the Mediterranean, defining a contradictory process of humanitarization of politics and simultaneously radicalization of the humanitarian.

Underlining three levels of tensions (between state – or supra-state – and NGOs; between different NGOs; and within individual organizations), the second aim is to highlight how the concept of "recovery" is built on board different ships. "Person Overboard Recovery" is in fact the name of the maneuver for the recovery of people who fall or jump into the water from vessels in distress. Then, on board the ship, there is another type of "recovery": moral, pedagogical, educational. I intend to explore how, during the seemingly suspended time aboard, the "castaway" is made "patient" and then prepared to become a "refugee".

Third, the paper shifts between a "macro" and a "micro" scale, to highlight the negotiations of different sovereignties and show how frictions between ethics and morality generate creative paths for a resemantization of arbitrariness. Against an apparently dominant (supra)state mechanism which is replicated inside some organizations, and which tends towards standardization, bureaucratization, and securitarian and hierarchical management, it seems possible to detect also individual practices of resistance and "mutiny", both among activists/operators and migrants.
The Rhythmic City: Bovine Topographies of Delhi

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Abstract

How might the rhythms of a city be felt and articulated? What happens when they are composed through pulses and counterpoints involving both humans and other-than-humans? How might this enable us to write the city differently as compared to more mainstream (and anthropocentric) accounts?

Taking Lefebvre’s conception of ‘Rhythmanalysis’, this presentation explores the more-than-human rhythms of the everyday, particularly of bovine rhythms in the city of Delhi. On the one hand, the presence and mobilities of bovines in the city, particularly cows, has cultivated certain practices of care, feeding, provisioning, of familiarity by human inhabitants. On the other hand, and the question I raise is – is this a familiarity the cows share with people and city-spaces they frequent?

Taking one cow and one fieldsite as example, I examine how for the women inhabitants of the colony—feeding, aiding in the birthing process, and taking care of the numerous bovines who traverse their colony—becomes a part and parcel of their everyday. Similarly, I explore how the cow creates a rhythm of its own with and against rhythms of people, society, and the city – accounting for its own bodily rhythms and the cyclic rhythms of nature. Here, I argue that bovine rhythms add to the “rhythmic totality of place” (Edensor, 2010) where these particular rhythms intersect with a host of other rhythms —of human and nonhuman bodies, as well as from the street, neighbourhood, state—producing a “complex polyrhythm of place”.

Reimagining the post-conflict landscapes of Swat Valley, NW Pakistan through community place-based storytelling

Sarah De Nardi
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Abstract

In the context of conflict and reconciliation, qualitative and community-led imaginaries and bottom-up perspectives often get sidelined in favour of more structured aid or rebuilding agendas and approaches. Working with the creative side of communities can add nuance to very sensitive topics such as insurgency and conflict. This paper reports and reflects on the benefits and challenges of a mixed method visual storytelling experiment with communities in NW Pakistan. Initiatives such as shared visualisation and emotional mapping can and do involve a more inclusive cross section of the population, and can support local communities in gaining more agency and authorship in their story of survival.
The Sentient City: Canine Geographies of Urban India

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Abstract

How might we read the city through the sentient experiences of nonhuman animals? What does this do for thinking about the city and its beastly places? How does including nonhuman animals in narratives of the urban help us to envision a materially interactive city?

This paper is themed around this making of the city by urban canids. Taking Delhi as a case study, it describes how its streets are composed of innumerable interactions between humans and nonhumans. I narrate city-living through the point of view of domestic canids - more particularly, the urban street dogs. Dogs in their everyday living sense their environments, which helps them in building relations with their co-habitants. They create their own space in the city by repurposing infrastructure, otherwise built by and for humans. These affective relations, shaped through the multisensorial experiences of the dogs, enables them to work against the urban form and make their own beastly places. Moreover, dog-human interactions vary across existing urban processes (socioeconomic and political): different people respond to dogs differently, some fighting for and some fighting over dogs. Likewise, dogs also respond to these people differently. These frictions re-configure the governance of these relations, which police both the dogs and the humans interacting with them. I argue that an etho-ethnographic approach to these dog-human entanglements presents the city differently, as one formed by the interactions of dogs and humans against the usual understanding of the urban polis. These varied exchanges enable the city to be rethought as a sentient living entity where the everyday practices and knowledges of its canine inhabitants leads to the description of an urban space built through time - the sentient city.
Homelessness as Active Housing: Claiming Spaces and Identity in the City

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Abstract

In Indian cities, most of the informal workers live on meagre wages and are unable to afford a proper and secure rented housing arrangement due to which they are forced to live on the streets or in precariat housing arrangements. Based on research among the homeless in Mumbai, this paper interrogates the category of homelessness to problematize the established and dominant notions with which the migrant workers in the city are understood especially when it comes to their housing situation. Housing oneself in a city outside legal settlements requires tremendous fortitude and enterprise. When migrant workers arrive in the city, they add layers to the dimension of informal and precariat housing or homelessness since for most of them, homelessness is a ‘learnt’ or ‘taught’ condition. Their spatial arrangements serve as enablers for them in order to survive the harsh living conditions alongside helping them in consolidating their gains. For such migrants, homelessness should be construed as ‘active housing’, which is propelled through familial ties, social networks and relationships. Homelessness as active housing is the endeavour of the severely underpaid working force to house themselves, howsoever informally, in the face of acute poverty and an ever-shrinking welfare safety net. In addition, claiming spaces and identity through active housing by the homeless migrants can be seen as the assertion of the poor as citizens.
Towards an evolutionary approach to sustainability transitions in tourism

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Abstract

Although UNEP (2011) has listed tourism as one of the ten key sectors in which (and through which) sustainability transitions should be pursued, still little is known about how transitions to sustainable tourism unfold, how tourism contributes to wider sustainability transitions, what roles different stakeholders play, how these processes manifest in different political, institutional, and socio-cultural contexts, and what historical factors shape them. The aim of this paper is to address this gap. The paper draws from three different well-established agendas – sustainable tourism, tourism evolution, and sustainability transitions. By means of highlighting the key advancements made by each of those, it proposes a new, combined agenda – sustainability transitions in tourism – to move the research on sustainable tourism in a new direction and help ensure that the desired transition to more sustainable forms of tourism (or a lack thereof) is more comprehensively understood. Thus, in order to address both spatial and temporal aspects of sustainability transitions in tourism, the paper makes a case for an evolutionary perspective – a combination of evolutionary economic geography (EEG) and geographical political economy (GPE). As such, it distils useful conceptual language for the task at hand. Special attention is paid to innovations and its central role in wider sustainability transitions. In this respect, the paper contends that it is a critical and unique moment to bring tourism studies and the interdisciplinary field of sustainability transitions closer together. While the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be under control, the tendencies to take the tourism industry back to the largely unsustainable pre-pandemic “business-as-usual” practices strongly clash with the various calls to use to rebuild tourism in a more sustainable way. The role of innovations in fostering sustainability transitions in tourism should not be therefore underestimated and their role in stimulating and promoting sustainable solutions should be recognised.
Speaking *volumes* about death: Communicating, controlling and containing mobile material exposures and entangled voluminous relations

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Abstract

Far from rendering (more-than) human bodies static in space and time, death involves often invisible mobilities as the materialities of deceased beings – and practices and processes of disposal, discard, decay, and burial – take place across earthly volumes. Oddly, however, whilst there is now much attention to the spatialities of death and dying, we are yet to speak volumes about the entangled relations between living and dead worlds and the modes of territorial governance that aim to reign-in the transgressive movements associated with death. In this paper we mix and merge the voluminous space of land and sea (and their false binaries) as well as combining the surface and deep to think about how the living become more attuned towards an earthly and affective politics of being and existing with dead worlds. We reflect on two seemingly disparate case studies: public health reform in England responding to burial grounds in the late 19th century and the dead zones of global oceans in the current era to explore how the often invisible mobilities of death, and its materialities, become communicated, controlled and contained. Looking closely at the voluminous relations between the living and the (expansive) dead, we account for how earthly matter comes to evoke political responses (Bosworth, 2016) and generate knowledges that create territorial spatial frameworks of regulation. We ask how dead human and more-than-human bodies span across and shape surface and sub-surface environments, and how the forceful, diffusive and mobile nature of death’s materiality is realised, questioning what this means for the territorialising politics of management.
Phytochemical content of *Cucurbita pepo* L. and foreign rhizobacterial complements

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Abstract

Soil upholds the functioning of terrestrial systems. Attributes include water, climate-control, nutrient cycling and biodiversity. Soil is a vulnerable, limited resource; producing food, energy and raw materials. Soils provide ecosystem functions for human well-being; supporting plant biomass production. Edaphic rhizospheres are rich in microorganisms. Microbial functional-diversity influences soil processes and functions. Plant growth promoting rhizobacteria (PGPR) are a group of bacteria inhabiting plant rhizospheres, and enable wide and ecologically significant functions. PGPR-based biotechnology elicits soil-inoculant developments, contributing to sustainable agriculture; reducing the need for chemical intervention. Rhizobacteria from *Olea europaea* were tested for their capacity to produce plant growth promoting (PGP) molecules in vitro including Indole acetic acid, siderophores, phosphatase and ammonia; cell-wall degrading enzymes: lipase, phospholipase and glucanase. Additional in vivo tests on zucchini seeds, germination and vegetative parameters were performed and subjected to statistical analysis. Phytochemical parameters of zucchini plants were measured, quantifying the water content of fresh-leaves, mineral content of aerial parts, presence of different pigments of the leaves and determination of total polyphenol content. The tested rhizobacteria showed a capacity to produce PGP molecules and cell-wall degrading enzymes. They showed an ability to significantly enhance root length, lateral root formation, the number of leaves and flowers. Further, rhizobacteria enhanced carotenoid, chlorophyll A and total polyphenol content. The soil environment has ecological niches endowed with diverse chemical processes. Rhizobacteria with PGPR molecules resolve soil deficits including provision of biochemical resources for plant health and development, leading to optimisation of agro-ecological food production for human and ecosystem benefit.
Objects, affects and gender boundaries: the case of women’s markets in post-Taliban’s Swat

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Abstract

We know what inanimate objects can be agentic within assemblages and networks including humans and non-humans, but their agency in explaining the culturally constructed gendered boundaries is underdeveloped. Of key significance within this explanatory power of objects is their role in shaping and exploring the affective dimension of markets. To analyse this, we draw on women’s markets in the Swat valley of Pakistan and some objects specific to women to explain the affective materiality of these markets. In doing so, we trace the role of these objects in everyday realities of the marketplaces to explain how objects propel and pervade gendered boundaries in the marketplaces of Pakistan. To this end, we empirically explore the affective embeddedness of objects within the everyday of women’s markets in Pakistan. Unlike non-representational theories of affect and some new materialist approaches, we draw on affect as lived, culturally constructed and gendered in nature. We draw specifically on papers/notices (related to women’s markets) circulated by Taliban, curtains and their changing role and associated affective dimensions, dummies and bras. Each of the aforementioned objects are either directly or indirectly related to women’s body and has a specific role in the everyday of women’s market in the context of Swat. Thus these objects offer a powerful explanation of the gendered nature of the affects generated by objects in the everyday of markets. Methodologically, these objects were not pre-selected, instead our tack on these objects and their affective dimensions is developed from the ground up in our conversations with local men and women about everyday life in women’s markets.
Ocean Cadences: rethinking ocean space in time, volume, and rhythm

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Abstract

The ‘volumetric turn’ in geography and related disciplines has quite literally deepened scholarly thinking on space and territory. From retheorising the spatial axes on which power operates (Weizman, 2002; Elden, 2013), to an attenuation to aerial (Adey, 2010; Jackman, 2017; Sloterdijk, 2009), subterranean (Squire and Dodds, 2019), and marine spaces (Steinberg and Peters, 2015), the turn to volume has reconceptualised the grammars of space and territory. However, as Tina Harris has noted, territory does not only exist within three dimensions, but rather four (2020). As Harris argues, space has a temporal dimension too, which complicates how we describe and examine territorial volumes, raising questions about change, process, and vacillation.

Drawing on both Harris and Steinberg and Peters, I argue that to theorise territory more completely, we must examine temporality and volume together. This requires a spatial ontology that is formed around the terminology of process and change, as well as boundaries and containers. In this paper, I therefore ask how vocabularies of time can impact how we theorise territory. Specifically, I focus on the language of emerging territories of ocean governance (Peters, 2020). I will examine the 30x30 campaign that seeks to create marine protected areas covering 30 percent of the world’s oceans by 2030 and argue that a grammar of percentage territorialises ocean space as flat and timeless. I will then ask how the language of time can expand our theoretical conception of territorial volume. Here, I ask how the concept of ‘cadences’ – rise and fall, patterns of movement and rhythms in time – can help us to theorise ocean volume and temporality together and speculate on how this grammar of time/depth could nurture novel forms of ocean governance.
Feminist vocabularies of volume

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Abstract

‘Volume’ is increasingly mobilised as a conceptual framework through which to engage, embrace and interrogate space in three-rather than two-dimensional terms, attending to its complex heights and depths. Work spanning a range of disciplines has foregrounded the ways in which volumes have been strategically mobilised, managed, and mitigated by state and military actors, while largely remaining underpinned by questions and vocabularies of violence, control and exclusion. While rich expositions, in this paper we wish to reapproach volume. In so doing, we draw upon feminist work to highlight and explore volume as in and in more gentle terms. Working through examples, we argue that considering ‘gentle volumes’ and volumes gently, opens space for attention to more diverse actors, acts, and dispositions - those that indeed comprise, compose and experience volume. In foregrounding gentle and care-full volumes we seek at once to demonstrate that volume both exceeds conflict and the calculative, and encompasses and enacts more diverse sensibilities and political capacities. Noting that volumes can also be care-full, hopeful and creative, we argue that there are thus both many more stories of volume to tell, and more diverse vocabularies through which to tell them.
Urban Abandonment and the Ordering of Public Spaces: The Case of Cairo’s Street Vendors

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Abstract

The current presentation examines Lefebvre’s concept of differential space in relation to how street vendors appropriate Cairo’s abandoned public spaces. This is noted in the way they reclaimed their right to the city through the occupation of abandoned public spaces and the appropriation of streets and sidewalks for informal commercial activities. This will be examined in relation to the spatial contestation created as a result of the official neoliberal vision of highly regulated and sanitized public spaces. The study investigates how abandoned public spaces are (re)produced and consumed by street vendors through a process of spatial appropriation and everyday experiences and practices. Participant observation within various case study areas has indicated that street vending contributed to the vibrancy and inclusiveness within abandoned public spaces by engaging people from different backgrounds in the exchange of goods and services. The findings attempt at challenging the rhetoric of the state-controlled military regime regarding the promotion of the ‘civilized city’ without street vendors as an indicator of stability and order. The issue of street vending and informal commercial spaces offers an opportunity to address questions concerning the relationship between street vendors and state authorities, and between competing narratives and contested claims, where questions of order, legitimacy, and right to the city may be investigated and negotiated.
Energy and tourism in South Africa: is there a sustainable path forwards?

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Abstract

Tourism, outside of tourist transportation, has traditionally not been seen as an energy-intensive sector of the economy. This is changing as tourism establishments play a greater role as both consumers and producers of electricity. In this paper, we examine the role that the tourism sector can play in the sustainable energy transition in South Africa, a country heavily reliant on coal-fired electricity and struggling to provide a reliable electricity supply. We situate our arguments within the sustainability transitions debates in tourism – an emerging area of inquiry. Low-carbon (incl. energy) transitions are central to the sustainability transitions agenda. This includes a focus on the role of innovations to bring about transitions. Innovation is a way to foster path creation through ‘mindful deviation’ from unsustainable paths. Multi-dimensional and multi-actor processes are significant in the context of sustainability. The above links with governance concerns and the importance of collective action for sustainability. Against this backdrop, this paper examines whether there is a potential sustainable path with respect to energy and tourism in South Africa. We specifically look into the challenges and prospects associated with electricity provision while taking broader energy considerations into account. This includes recent legislation change that has facilitated the participation of smaller renewable energy generators while the unavailability of grid electricity is an escalating problem. The overall aim of this paper is to analyse whether the forces of lock-in (into unsustainable/carbon-intensive practices) are stronger than the forces of path-creation towards sustainability in the context of tourism. The South African case presents a particular, perhaps extreme, set of challenges when it comes to energy transitions and tourism. This said, there will be similar challenges elsewhere, especially in the global South where under-resourced governments, businesses and societies battle with the impacts of climate change and the adaptations needed to confront this.
Mass violence, securitization and social difference: Everyday (in)securities after the Plymouth ‘incel’ shooting

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Abstract

In summer 2021, a white male ‘incel’ carried out the deadliest mass shooting in the UK in a decade, killing five people in Keyham, Plymouth. When police declined to declare the shooting a ‘terrorist’ incident, it sparked controversy about race, religion and what counts as terrorism. In a similar vein, security scholars have critiqued the discursive production of the stereotypical victim of terrorism. A growing literature (cf. Breen-Smyth 2014, 2020; Martini 2020; Nguyen 2019; Pain 2009, 2014) shows that vulnerability and violence that do not fit security expectations of white, Christian men receive less primacy in security policy. At stake is a reductive, conservative view of everyday life that cannot account for a diversity of experiences of vulnerability nor respond to diverse security needs. In this paper I draw on fieldwork with security services, government, community groups and Plymouth residents to illustrate everyday experiences of threat and security in Plymouth post-Keyham. I do so to argue that the public and collective spatial imaginaries of ‘terror’ and ‘security’ belie a diversity of experiences of vulnerability and safety inflected by gender, race, religion, age, migration history and chance. Terrorism and securitization create not only shared fear, vulnerability, trauma and recovery but also private, atomised (in)securities not adequately addressed by current security paradigms. What results is divergent security practices split along official and grassroots lines. In conclusion, I argue for increased attention to the affective afterlives of terror events to understand what happens when shared events of fear and vulnerability traverse difference.
Everyday precarity and porcine biopolitics: informal pig rearing practices and African Swine Fever in Delhi and Guwahati

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationships between pig rearers and pigs in informal settlements in Delhi and Guwahati, India, to understand precarity in the everyday lives of both people and pigs alike. In Delhi pig rearing practices have been rendered illegal, considered polluting and hence informalised and made invisible. Deeply rooted in caste-based socio-cultural, religious and economic values, pig rearing, slaughter and sale continue to thrive in the city, sustained by repurposing waste and remaking abandoned urban spaces as farmyards. Conversely, in Guwahati pig rearing is practised by members of most castes, ethnicities and classes; pig rearing, slaughter and sale is a profitable business enterprise and not just a source of secondary income. When Guwahati was beset by African Swine Fever the sector faced extensive livestock losses, and a series of bio-security protocols were implemented to impede the virus and protect livelihoods. These measures did not include Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes communities, or other marginal groups, who farm in informal settlements or disputed hill areas within the city, and which were left to the mercy of the virus. Here then in Delhi and Guwahati different forms of biopolitical ordering reveal the precariousness of human-porcine relationships in the city.
From niches to regime: sustainability transitions in a wine-tourism destination

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Abstract

The sustainability transitions agenda is an interdisciplinary research field that aims to conceptualise and explore the various mechanisms promoting societal changes towards sustainability (Köhler et al., 2019). As such, it focuses on the radical transformations needed to disrupt the existing, path-dependent, often largely unsustainable systems (Geels, 2018; Markard et al., 2012). One of the key frameworks in research on sustainability transitions is the multi-level perspective (MLP) which argues that socio-technical systems consist of three interactive levels (i.e. niches, regimes, and landscapes) (Geels, 2005, 2010; Geels and Schot, 2011). While research on sustainability transitions has so far mainly focused on energy and transport systems, little attention has been paid to tourism (Köhler et al., 2019; Niewiadomski and Brouder, 2022). Meanwhile, tourism studies can largely benefit from the existing research on sustainability transitions (Niewiadomski and Brouder, 2022). In this respect, this paper uses the MLP to analyse the interactions between the niche, regime, and landscape levels in the Margaret River Region (Western Australia) and evaluate to what extent these interactions promote more sustainable forms of tourism. The Margert River Region has a thriving tourism industry based on wine, surfing, a unique natural environment and rich cultural heritage (Jones et al., 2019). The paper draws from 51 semi-structured interviews and shows how wine-tourism in the region evolved from its niche status in the 1960s to become a dominant regime in the destination only a few decades later. While such a transformation promoted a shift in the tourism regime towards a more sustainable configuration, it mainly relied on incremental innovations rather than radical ones. As such, by means of applying the multi-level perspective to research on the evolution of sustainable tourism destinations, this paper aims to contribute to the incipient field of sustainability transitions in tourism.
Everyday atmospheres of (counter)terrorism in Birmingham

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Abstract

Terrorism is a profoundly urban phenomenon. Despite a relatively low number of terrorist attacks compared to other world regions, European cities are increasingly being redesigned through a series of material infrastructural interventions (known as ‘target hardening’) aimed at protecting crowds, buildings, and infrastructure from hostile threats (Coaffee 2021). In the UK, particularly following the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing, target hardening in urban public spaces has intensified in preparation for the Protect Duty, including the enclosure and surveillance of pedestrian areas with bollards, barriers, police and private security patrols, and CCTV cameras. While these visible manifestations of geopolitical crisis and domestic insecurity often appear near the sites of attacks, they’ve proliferated in many English cities that do not have a recent experience with terrorism. This militarisation of the built environment has been coupled with an increasingly decentralised approach to counterterrorism, which incites residents, employees and local authorities to remain vigilant to detect what ‘doesn’t feel right’ and thus help prevent possible attacks. However, security officials, planners, and product designers remain concerned about causing too much alarm, often citing a desire to reassure a public who want to ‘feel safe’ via visible security measures without creating panic. In the context of this heightened sense of threat, counterterrorism has become both an omnipresent and unremarkable part of the urban landscape, which is altering the felt experience of public space in cities. Using an atmospheric conceptual and methodological approach and drawing on ethnographic research with Birmingham residents and interviews conducted with local and national security officials, urban planners, and grassroots organisations, this paper analyses how counterterrorism measures impact the atmospheres of a city without recent experiences of terrorism. I argue that both the anticipation of terrorism and counterterrorism infrastructure are altering the everyday experience of urban life for residents who have become both desensitised to and hyper-aware of (the threat of) insecurity.
Practices and power in processes of transformative change: the example of 'Recognition and Rewards' at Dutch Universities

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Abstract

After decades of ignorance and silencing, social unsafety in higher education is finally in the open and on the agenda, at least in countries such as the Netherlands and the UK. This paper applies a practice perspective to shed a hands-on light on the critical role of power and legitimacy in the attempts to address social unsafety in the Dutch university system. Creating a safer and fairer working environment for academics is part of an ambitious national programme called 'Recognition and Rewards', which seeks to develop a more diversified, less hierarchical university. Rolling out over the whole academic sector, 'Recognition and Rewards' can be considered a case of 'transformative change' geared towards an overhaul of university practices concerning selection, assessment, promotion, supervision, leadership, communication etc. The programme makes intensive use of dialogue and communication. Drawing on our own participation and data-collection, we discuss how actual institutional dimensions of power and legitimacy are rooted deeply in daily working practices as well as ingrained forms of hierarchy. In this context, much 'transformative change' seems confined to the symbolic level of practices, leaving the basic structures of inequality and vulnerability untouched. However, we also see that where 'Recognition and Rewards' helps vulnerabilities to surface at the symbolic level, change occurs, even dramatically. From one example, a massive reduction in precarious contracts, we draw further lessons.
Biopolitics of Care and Affection: Shaping Domesticity in Feral Cat Colonies in Rome

Giovanna Capponi
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Abstract

Due to their high ecological impact as predators, their status as beloved pets, and their “legal freedom to roam”, cats are ideal animals to rethink the interspecies relationships in private and public spaces. This implies not only the ways in which pet cats are cared for by humans but also their interaction with the urban fauna outside their territory. This paper analyses the politics of care and management of feral cat colonies in Rome, looking at feeding practices and welfare dynamics put in place by private volunteers, administrative personnel, and veterinarians. Rome hosts more than 4000 feral cat colonies and some of the largest colonies in Europe, situated around touristic attractions and archaeological sites, but also in peripheral and marginal locations. Despite being considered pests by the municipal administration, feral cats are often managed and fed by cat welfare associations or self-managed groups of volunteers, whose interaction with cats shape notions of ferality and domesticity in the urban environment. In these settings, feral cats interact and prey on small birds and rodents while competing for food with seagulls, attracted by the large amounts of food waste produced by humans in urban areas. Drawing from ethnographic data, I will look at how these multispecies contact zones raise issues related to human and animal health, care in companion species, and the biopolitical governance of stray animals and pets.
International student indebtedness: who finances the international education market in Canada?

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Abstract

Financialization and internationalization of higher education across neoliberal economies go hand in hand. Globally, there are now 6 million international students, up from 2 million in 2000, while the number of international students in Canada has increased sixfold in the same time period (UNESCO, 2021). Today, international students contribute over $22B per year to Canada’s GDP, pay four times more in tuition fees as compared to domestic students and are responsible for almost 40% of all tuition fees paid across Canada (StatCan, 2021). International students are positioned as the products of the lucrative education industry, in which a private student loans market, targeted towards international students (with higher interest rates, unique requirements and unregulated practices), is expanding. International students, who exist in a liminal space between immigrants and visitors, navigate this financialized system with incurring debts while having fewer rights and opportunities than students with Canadian citizenship. Despite the growing impacts of private finance on international students’ lives, there is limited research on the mechanisms, actors and relations of finance in international higher education (IHE) and the lived experiences of indebtedness among international students. This paper provides a synthetic review of the literature on the financialization of IHE and shares the preliminary findings of a research project that traces the social impacts of privatized finance across student communities nationally and transnationally. This research aims for a nuanced understanding of student indebtedness, examining how the financialization of IHE intersects with broader forces of oppression in society.
How will that ever scale? Automated vehicles (AVs), data and the city

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Abstract

Speculation around the future of urban mobility has increased alongside advances in vehicle autonomy. Automated vehicles (AVs) could increase accessibility, improve road safety and reduce congestion, emissions and travel costs. But despite significant progress, it is proving extremely difficult to create safe and fully functional AVs, especially in busy city streets with other drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Predicting the behaviour of these road users and dealing with associated ‘edge cases’, are proving particularly challenging. This paper examines different urban sites used to develop, train, and test automated driving systems (ADS). Through engagement with interviews, podcasts, webinars, product demonstrations and conference presentations, I explore how particular cities, and areas within, are portrayed as ‘interesting’, ‘representative’ or ‘useful’ locations for gathering and generating data which can eventually be used to operationalise and scale the system. Rather than simply the ‘raw material’ of ADS development, this data is thus inscribed with a variety of expectations and purposes, interpretative frameworks and normativities. In tracing these, I foreground how worth is not produced by the intrinsic properties of a particular system but is a situated accomplishment of inscription and justification of the value of their data, hardware, and software. Through this ongoing justificatory work developers and promotors seek to differentiate their ADS from competitors and convince publics, investors and governments of its potential future value.
Recovering the Verdant City in North Korea: Greening Pyongyang, Wonsan and Samjiyon

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Abstract

North Korea has long sought to recover the verdancy of its landscape, seeing the Korean peninsula’s colonial past as an exercise in ecological asset and forest resource stripping (Fedman, 2021). Pyongyang after its liberation from Japanese Imperialism rooted its national mythologies in the forests and mountains of its northern border territories, and its national recreation and regeneration in the reforesting of its hillsides and wildernesses. A Socialist nation was to be a verdant nation, its trees and timber aligned with the axes of its political charismas. While Benjamin Joinau (2014), has outlined the transformation of Pyongyang’s urban superstructures in the service of North Korea’s ideological outlook, this paper explores a reconfiguration of their environments. Following previous work by this author (Winstanley-Chesters, 2019), on North Korea’s forest geographies and histories, this paper explores the role of trees and greening in the development of the contemporary North Korean city. From the Taedong riverside and its new and emerging apartment complexes, the reimagined ideologically important city of Samjiyon, and the seaside tourist destination of Wonsan, the paper considers the greening of North Korean urban spaces as both an articulation of its environmental aspirations, and as a technology of recovery, rehabilitation and reconfiguration. North Korean cities and architectures are reimagined as terrains of relaxation, leisure, aspiration and ecology.
Structural disadvantage for priority populations: The spatial inequity of New Zealand’s COVID-19 vaccination rollout

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Abstract

Aim: To examine the spatial equity, and associated health equity implications, of the geographic distribution of COVID-19 vaccination services in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Method: The distribution of Aotearoa’s population was mapped, and the enhanced twostep floating catchment method (E2SFCA) applied to estimate spatial access to vaccination services. The Gini coefficient and spatial autocorrelation measures assessed the spatial equity of vaccination services. Additional statistics included an analysis of spatial accessibility for priority populations, and by District Health Board (DHB) region.

Results: Spatial accessibility to vaccination services varies across Aotearoa, and appears to be better in major cities than rural regions. A Gini coefficient of 0.426 confirms that spatial accessibility scores are not shared equally across the vaccine-eligible population. Furthermore, priority populations including Māori, Pasifika, and older people have statistically significantly lower spatial access to vaccination services. This is also true for people living in rural areas. Spatial access to vaccination services also varies significantly by DHB region as does the Gini coefficient, and the proportion of DHB priority population groups living in areas with poor access to vaccination services. A strong and significant positive correlation was identified between average spatial accessibility and the Māori vaccination rate ratio of DHBs.

Conclusion: COVID-19 vaccination services in Aotearoa are not equitably distributed. Priority populations, with the most pressing need to receive COVID-19 vaccinations, have the worst access to vaccination services.
Challenging Biopolitical Regimes Through Supplementary Feeding of Urban Pigeons

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Abstract

Humans have always fed nonhuman animals, whether deliberate or not. Whether humans feed them intentionally or unintentionally, it is a practice that transforms public urban spaces into a zone that facilitates multispecies encounters and relations. One species that effectively found its urban ecological niche among humans is the feral pigeon which has become adept at nesting and foraging in urban centres. Biopolitical regimes deem pigeons to be unsanitary and frame them as a health risk with subsequent repercussions in both dominant discourse as well as in public governance. Anti-pigeon infrastructure is erected in the form of spikes, electric rails and netting while hawks are employed as other-than-human pest controllers in attempts to curb the pigeon population in London. Contrary to what this biopolitical regime prescribes, groups of wildlife-aware citizens feed and aid pigeons in urban spaces based on a contrasting ontology and an alternative valuation of life. These groups voluntarily feed, catch, transport and rehabilitate pigeons and in doing so enter a multispecies relationship with a contentious nonhuman coresident. Food becomes an essential biopolitical medium that affords these socioecological relations while pest control measures use food – or the lack of access to it – as a means to limit the pigeon population. Through an examination of the urban pigeon-human-food nexus with a focus on multispecies ethnography, this paper discusses the ways pigeons use food to negotiate their place in the urban ecology of London.
International student fees: flows, volatility and non-circulation at the intersection of money markets and education markets

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Abstract

The growth in international student numbers has led to a vast growth in the literature on internationalisation of higher education. Less well studied are the flows of money that accompanies this internationalisation. This is in part, because international students are seen as privileged for whom money is not an issue. Yet, internationalisation takes different forms including distance education, and involves people of different classes, for many of whom access to money and ability to transfer fees are key problems. Fee flows depend on how money is bordered and how it is caught up in other markets – currency and commodity markets, especially oil. In this paper, we explore the difficulties that international students from Namibia, Zimbabwe and Nigeria studying at the University of South Africa face in paying fees within this context and the strategies they adopt to overcome limited access to formal money transfer processes. It highlights the relations between multiple markets, each with its own spatialities, the entanglement of formal and informal markets and the unequal effects they have on students. The paper ends by arguing for the need for a radical agenda around internationalisation which recognises students’ challenges in paying fees.
Healing/Recovering from the "Arduous March"/famine? Pyongyang’s New Urban Way of Life

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Abstract

In the mid-1990s, North Korea went through its biggest economic crisis, known by its government as the “Arduous March”. North Korea’s was forced adopt alternate strategies in order to survive and black markets (jangmadang) appeared nationwide, even in Pyongyang. North Korean’s government tolerated these alternative activities, since it had few options and lacked capability. Such spaces generated a unique opportunity for North Korean citizens to earn their own money and savings and soon, they sought investment opportunities (Lee Chul, 2016). Though the government’s failure of provision shattered any faith its population had in its capabilities, North Korean society has been deeply transformed and Pyongyang adapted its political strategy in order to respond to its population’s changed conception and demands with regards to living standards. As a result, since the mid-2010s, Pyongyang’s cityscape has been completely reconfigured, similar to other post-socialist cities (Drummond and Douglas, 2020) with the construction of a series of residential districts in the historical downtown area (Yim Dongwoo, 2017). Simultaneously, the development of leisure spaces has been a part of Pyongyang’s process of modernization and living standards enhancement.

This paper will consider how the consequences of the «Arduous March» and the reconfiguration afterwards affected the structure of Pyongyang itself by analyzing the new urban projects, especially those constructed after Kim Jong Un’s rise to power in 2011 and connecting them to an analysis of the recent development of leisure parks and leisure practices in order to understand the economic and social changes in the North Korean society.
Atmospheres of (counter)terrorism: productions, governance, territories

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Abstract

This paper articulates and reflects on a series of questions that emerge from thinking through the conjunctions of atmosphere, security, and (counter)terrorism. Taking atmosphere as spatial expression of collective felt and affective experiences comprising human and nonhuman agencies, the paper considers three inter-related points. Firstly, we consider the questions of how atmospheres are produced, and what diverse and shifting agencies are involved in that production. Here, particular attention is paid to both the more-than-human composition of the ongoing unfolding of atmospheres and how different bodies arrive to and/or are differentially produced through such tuned atmospheres. Secondly, we reflect on questions concerning how national security agendas and atmospheric governances become perceived, mobilized and experienced (or not) in ordinary encounters with (counter)terrorism. Finally, we ask how we might reconcile – on one side – calls in security studies for long-term and spatially diffuse accounts of the felt effects of (counter)terrorism (with a risk of losing spatial grounding and nuance) and – on the other side – atmospheric accounts of geopolitics that are limited to bounded environments or spatial categories of (in)security. Together, these questions contribute towards a cross-disciplinary research agenda for studying everyday urban experiences of (in)security that critically interrogates what urban environments we end up living with.
Pyongyang: An Urban Metamorphosis Under the Power of Marketization

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Abstract

Pyongyang has been actively involved in the dramatic developments which have taken place on the Korean peninsula over the last century. This paper discusses how the rapid transitions between political epochs, from the Kingdom of Joseon, the separation of the peninsula, the Korean War, North Korea and its Juche socialism, to the beginning of its marketization, have influenced urban planning and the development of Pyongyang. Although the North Koreans have made every effort to create an ideal socialist city, marked by its indigenous Juche ideology, Pyongyang has inherited many features from royal and colonial periods, while its urban planning to a great extent resembles that of Eastern European capitals before the collapse of socialism (Ahn, 2012). Dynamic marketization, beginning as a response to the economic crisis of the mid-1990s, has led to significant commercialization of urban space and the intensification of real estate operations throughout the city, though excluding the central core, which is still occupied by governmental offices and symbolic places (Em et al, 2021). Therefore, the spread of marketization, even in the absence of significant ideological and political relaxation, has instigated not only a metamorphosis transforming Pyongyang into a post-socialist city (Em & Ward, 2021), but also supported its post-crisis recovery through realization of the ambitious development projects. That being said, the trajectory for further development is unclear as while the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously damaged the service sector, new housing districts continue to be constructed.
Aspiring from the Margins: Interrogating Young People’s Classed ‘Capacity to Aspire’ in Bodoland, India

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Abstract

Appadurai’s (2004) concept of ‘capacity to aspire’ is a widely used concept for studying aspirations across academic disciplines. Scholars have used the category of class to demonstrate how young people’s capacity to aspire are mediated through the social class status of their respective families. Inquiring into the case of Bodoland – a marginal region in North-eastern India, this paper complicates the category of class when it comes to young people’s aspirations. Bodoland is a region that has remained at the centre of constant political and armed struggles between different ethnic groups for various territorial claims ever since the independence of India from British control in 1947. Bodos, at approximately 30%, are numerically the largest population in Bodoland. In the 1980s, Bodo middle-class hegemons launched a political movement to assert their cultural dominance over the Bengali and Adivasi working class in the region, eventually culminating in Bodoland becoming an autonomous region. However, for the remaining 70% of the population who are non-Bodos, their class status gets disguised in their ethnicity and other identities. As a result, young people’s capacity to aspire is shaped not just by their ability to envisage pathways to the future but by an intersection of their class identity, that is based on not just their ethnicity, but also their religion and gender. The presentation shares snippets from class-based life stories of three young people from the region: a Hindu Bodo girl, a Bengali Muslim boy, and a Christian Adivasi girl.
Beyond Repair and Revival to Resilient Recovery: Imagining Future Geographies for the Urban Spaces of Pyongyang

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Abstract

The division of the Korean peninsula is a kind of suspended socio- and geo-political geography haunted by the desire for recovery for a unified or reconciled Korea. A resilient recovery, one that can adapt to changing internal and external conditions, requires more than repairing the physical geography of North Korea, or the reviving mythic ideals of a unified past defined by the Joseon era? Japanese colonialism? U.S. Military Rule? the First Republic of Korea? Resilient recovery, requires transformation, the kind that does more than change the appearance of something, but that completely changes its character to arrive at a something that is conceived of, as being better. Resilient recovery also requires a vision and strategic insight. The Korean peninsula is not a geography beyond recovery, but one that requires the kind of vision and transformation that emerges from the free play of speculative imagination. This paper argues that imagination plays a crucial role for inventing alternative future contexts that are required for the resilient recovery of the Korean peninsula, and discusses the impact that these contexts could have on the future urban geographies of Pyongyang. These futures are not emancipatory futures, but bold and sometimes subtle transformative reinventions of the urban geography of Pyongyang generated by imagination, the rigors of analytic dialectic inquiry, and the projective form-giving capacity of design to imagine and give form to possible futures that emerge from an expanded field of possibilities than is allowed by the bounds of the current geopolitical stalemate.
Thrills as a Form of Recovery: A Proposal for an Urban Roller Coaster for Pyongyang

Jaeho Lee
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Abstract

The cities of North Korea are populated with over-scaled statues, monuments and propaganda murals that promote the Juche ideology of self-reliance, and idolize the autocratic rule of the Kim dynasty. Deliberately placed to maintain visual axes, these monuments make it impossible to escape the gaze of three generations of rulers, or imagine what life could be like without them. This paper argues that changing the urban geography of the public spaces of Pyongyang could play a role in the recovery of North Korea after unification or reconciliation by changing individual and collective memories of North Koreans. The approach taken here does not aim at exposing the social frameworks that open and constrain memory (Halbwach, 1992). Instead the paper suggests that the urban geography of Pyongyang’s public spaces could be a vehicle for transforming the human geography of these spaces in a way that allows people to change the memories imprinted on them by the public spaces designed by the Kim dynasty. As an example the paper outlines a theory for the formation of collective memory, and proposes a possible future for Pyongyang that inserts series of urban-scale roller coasters that physically connect existing monuments and landmarks, and allow citizens and visitors to have a thrilling and extreme experience that would allow them to escape, even if temporarily, the memories of a life constrained under the constant gaze of their rulers, as the first step towards opening up the possibility for them to imagine and realize their own desires and future.
Synergy between botanical and microbial agents against *Tetranychus urticae* Koch

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Abstract

*Tetranychus urticae* Koch is polyphagous and cosmopolitan, its spread occurs in the wind in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, the Pacific and Caribbean islands, North, Central and South America. Under ideal conditions, it forms dense populations, reducing yield in cotton, soybeans, legumes, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, strawberries, apples, pears, grapevines and flowers including chrysanthemums and orchids. In pursuit of developing bio-acaricidal agents of high-efficiency against adults of *T. urticae* Koch, we evaluated toxicity by residual contact and repellency of essential oils (EOs) of *Origanum compactum*, *Mentha piperita* and *Artemisia herba-alba* individually and in mixed combinations. Secondary metabolites produced by *Pseudomonas* species toxicity were tested using cell-free supernatants; combinations of oils and bacterial culture filtrates. The oils showed dose-dependent toxicity and repellency on mites. *O. compactum* oil was the most potent with complete mortality and 90% repellency at 8µL/mL. Binary and ternary mixtures of the EOs produced additive and antagonistic effects in terms of toxicity and repellency towards the mite, except for the combination of *O. compactum* and *M. piperita* that displayed a synergistic acaricidal relationship. Toxicity data of *Pseudomonas* spp. culture filtrates showed the bioactive acaricidal compounds were most effective when sprayed, with the entire integument of *T. urticae* exposed to the solutions; versus the dipping method where the ventral-side only was contacted. Combinations of the most active bacterial supernatant of *Pseudomonas* SS-03 with the EOs synergistically killed the mites. Two combinations were lethal after 72 hours of exposure. Synergistic combinations can be exploited in bio-acaricidal formulations to control the two-spotted spider-mite.
From behaviourist to ecological: How multi-agency partnerships respond to extra-familial harm - a Contextual Safeguarding account

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Abstract

Failures, or gaps in, multi-agency arrangements have formed the conclusions and recommendations of inquiries into extra-familial harm (EFH) such as child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, serious youth violence and teenage relationship abuse. When the stakes are so high, and the losses so great, it appears logical then to strengthen these arrangements. At the same time, there have been shifts in policy towards place-based and contextual approaches to harm and abuse requiring relationships between those that are tasked with supporting the welfare of young people (often social works) and those that work in neighbourhoods (such as the police). Yet bringing together different agencies with differing priorities, values, histories and epistemological underpinnings can raise a number of practical, ethical and philosophical challenges.

This presentation draws on data from a large-scale system change project with five local authorities in England and Wales implementing Contextual Safeguarding systems in child protection. Findings from this study have shown that when we ask local authorities to consider locations outside the home they tend to focus on purely location-based understandings of space. This can mean that they prioritise epistemological value bases that draw upon Community Safety and Police-based approaches to locations not ones rooted in the social conditions of places. We argue that, despite fundamental differences in these frameworks, their influence is not acknowledged or discussed during safeguarding decision-making and that consequently behaviourist approaches dominate, even when the intention is ecological.
Morecambe Bay timescapes: young people envisioning possible futures of their coasts

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Abstract

Current climate predictions show the significant impact that sea level rise and extreme weather events will have on coastal areas globally. However, the impact on individual coastal communities will vary greatly, and will depend not only on local geology, and climate – but also policies, infrastructures and preparedness of local communities. Yet, the complexity of these phenomena and the high level of specialisms involved often leaves such communities unable to actively participate in decision-making processes which will determine the future of the places where they live. Young people in particular are rarely engaged in such processes, despite being the ones who will be most affected by the impact of coastal changes. The ‘Morecambe Bay Timescapes’ project engaged students from three secondary schools and one college across Morecambe Bay in learning about how climate change might impact coastal spaces, allowing them to design a series of stereographic visualisations depicting their ideas for how ‘the future’ may play out. These visualisations, which were informed by climate science classes, interactive workshops, and fieldwork activities delivered by the research team, were presented in a location-specific interactive exhibition with invited experts. A key characteristic of the engagement activities was the focus on direct experience and on hyperlocal data, including predictive data, historical photos and family memories. Drawing upon initial reflections, the paper will discuss the role of the ‘Timescapes’ project in providing a bridge between young people’s ideas and strategic decision making, as well as in being a tool for immersive, place-based future making.
Bioremediation of petroleum contaminated solids integrating on site reactor composting

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Abstract

End to end oil and gas use is hugely polluting. Operations include exploration, drilling, production, storage, refinery and transportation. These processes create oil and gas well drilling waste and cuttings; solids and muds of spent drilling fluids, which are water and diesel oil based muds. Low or minimal impacting bioremediation is required to restore the environment. Micro-organisms neutralize or remediate contaminants. Composting, bioreactors, bio-slurry and farming are put to use, to manage diesel-oil polluted wastes in the field after or during remediation. Including a higher amount of compost in the initiating mixture led to enhanced remediation of the petroleum hydrocarbons. This baseline investigation spurs four years experimentation to further resolve organic material ratios, bulking agent proportions, nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizer use, and the agitation of simple hydrocarbons demands. Drilling waste management was successfully applied in 2019 and co-composting of 1200 cubic meters of crude oil contaminated saline soil was achieved in Iran in 2020. Further optimal combinations of complementary processes utilizing remediated waste in variable dynamic chemical settings offer hope to quench our activities in attempts to recover natural ecosystems subjected by human onslaught.
Avoiding future habitat degeneration and extinction ‘tipping points’ by quantifying wildness: an international Wildness Scale to assess effects of landscape degradation and ‘rewilding’ recovery strategies on extensively grazing equines

David Murray
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Abstract

In 2013, an 11-point Equine Wildness Scale was created (1 = Extremely Domesticated, 10 = Extremely Wild, 10* = feral) based upon perceived ‘extreme wildness’ of endangered Equus ferus przewalskii (Mongolian ‘wild’ horse). Following validation (2013-17), a U.K.-wide Wildness Survey of qualifying herds was completed (2019-22). Objectives were to: ratify the Scale’s acceptance; redefine ‘wildness’; enable inter-herd wildness comparisons; identify extant human-imposed environmental interventions and consequent wildness levels; assess effects upon herds of future, proposed land management strategies.

The Scale: (i) identifies increasing domesticity/wildness over time; (ii) may assist understanding of which herds are most able to withstand present and future U.K. extreme weather/climate events; (iii) facilitates discussion of habitat, equine and human interrelationships; (iv) recognises that human interventions within habitats influence equine wildness degree and, potentially, health; (v) encourages debate concerning present and future environmental recovery policies and protocols following perceived biodiversity degradation; (vi) encourages consideration of whether wildness loss might lead to ‘environmentally-determined grazing characteristics’ erosion and which might affect ‘genetic grazing characteristics’ adversely; (vii) suggests that ‘indicator species’ wildness scales may assist clearer understanding of post-recovery landscape sustainability and rewilding methods.

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Contested imaginaries of a coastal harbor in France

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Abstract

Urbanized coastal areas are framed by climate experts as both critical spaces of increasing risks, combining growing vulnerabilities (due to the concentration of human settlements and activities) and more frequent hazards (tied to sea level rise and extreme weather), but also key contributor to climate resilient development (IPCC 2022). However, in France, the question of coastal flooding is only recently becoming an object of public policies, discourses and practices, and not only of scientific analysis and expertise. While the number of modelings of the new flood-prone areas flourish, concrete and operational projects to tackle the issue are still scarce. The national government recommended early to relocate shoreline activities to retreat areas (MEDDE 2012). These solutions are contested, many studies pointing out the lack of perception of the risks, underlining the need to sensitize and informed more properly (Rulleau and al. 2017; 2015).

This paper proposes to focus on one specific industrial coastal site, Le Havre, on the English Channel. The “port of Paris” is the object of extension planning promoted by local actors, supported by the state. Meanwhile, state models characterize the whole industrial district as flood-prone. We want to argue that it’s not the lack of models or risks perception that hinder retreat solutions, but the confrontation with existing developing and technophile imaginaries for the coastal areas. Following Kim and Jasanoff’s definition of socio-technical imaginaries, we propose to look into the contesting visions of desirable futures for coastal areas expressed by concerned actors and institutions (Jasanoff and Kim 2015).
Rooted in Nature: scaling up a programme of nature-based activities for a diverse group of young people in Middlesbrough

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Abstract

Research on ‘therapeutic landscapes’ (Bell et al., 2018) has called for greater engagement with a wide range of personalised complex experiences to better understand the health benefits of nature-based programmes, ensuring that individuals or groups are not marginalised, and that the infrastructure requirements are clear, particularly in UK regions facing inequalities such as North East England. Accordingly, our research seeks to:

(i). Understand the value of a nature-based programme for mental health as understood by a diverse group of young people and nature-based practitioners in Middlesbrough;

(ii). Identify the requirements for effective infrastructure management and adaptation for scaling-up across the North East & North Cumbria region; and

(iii). Work with stakeholders to establish the conditions for sustainability, specifically to identify constraints and opportunities for integrating nature-based programmes into local systems.

Our presentation will outline a mixed-methods pilot project [24/01/22 to 23/01/23]. Three qualitative methods are utilised: photo-elicitation with young people aged 13-24 years involved in a nature-based programme (n=30); walking interviews with nature-based practitioners (n=30); and two Dilemmas Cafes (n=80). This work considers the features of nature-based activities most valued; the needs addressed by these activities; the range of activities available and models of practice utilised; the perceived challenges to scaling-up; alongside dilemmas regarding the focus, operation and delivery of nature-based health programmes.

Detail will also be shared on an online survey with nature-based stakeholders (n=100) that maps the existing regional network and collects information on the characteristics of settings, funding and partnerships required to successfully mobilise local natural assets.
Facilitating routes out of ‘hate relationships’ through a community-centred approach

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Abstract

In this paper we set out the concept of 'hate relationships' which draws on the intimate partner violence and coercive control literature to capture the multi-faceted, enduring, and spatially concentrated harm experienced by individuals, families and homes 'known' to local perpetrators of repeat hate incidents. We explore the key findings of our research conducted with an advocacy organisation in North East England (Donovan et al 2021), particularly focussing here on the role of professional practitioners (including the Police and Housing Associations) in (mis)identifying and (often not) resolving hate relationships. We suggest that an inability to identify and take seriously the enduring nature of these harms (often seen as one-off incidents); and too often mis-identifying hate as anti-social behaviour means that key institutions can become complicit in the perpetuation of racism, disablingism and homophobia. We build on these ideas by outlining progress on our current project with the advocacy organisation, key local practitioners, those targeted by hate relationships and other significant actors in communities. This work employs aspects of a contextual safeguarding approach (Firmin 2020) to develop a toolkit that facilitates early identification and resolution of hate relationships. The toolkit offers guidance for improving formal responses that cut short these harmful experiences, but crucially also looks to already existing networks of safety and support within communities that might be mobilised. In so doing we propose a non-criminal justice system approach that is sensitive to relationally produced local conditions in addressing the harms of hate.
Human-AI co-design and Urban Resilience

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Abstract

The notion of agency in architecture and urban design is increasingly characterised by non-linearity and complexity. As Artificial Intelligence (AI) models become more sophisticated, authorship and control over the design process are increasingly difficult to trace. The agency that underpins the design and making urban design and architecture is today characterised by a number of qualities, including trust in algorithms and automation, growing levels of complexity, contingent elements and indeterminacy.

Within this idea as a main framework, we explore possibilities of designer-machine co-design, specifically focusing on conditions of emergency and disruption. To do this, we present two related projects developed by our team in the past 2 years. In the first one we developed a quantitative method to find successful patterns in communities’ daily routines to assess and improve their resilience based on physical urban elements using position, density and mutual proximity of urban typologies (Carta et al. 2021).

Following on the result of the first project, in the second we used AI models (object detection and computer vision) to assess the extent to which communities would respond to change and disruption (slow-pace as in climate change, as well as fast-pace as natural disasters). Our model predicts the resilience of communities on the basis of urban morphology and configuration, using satellite imagery (Carta et al. 2022).

With these 2 projects, we would like to show and comment ways in which computational design methods are used by architects and planners to observe, analyse and measure the resilience of urban communities, as well as to predict and suggest ways in which it can be improved.

In the analysis of these two projects, we focus on the interaction designer-machine, building the argument that human and algorithmic intelligence should be considered as a whole, where the parts complement each other on the basis of their individual strengths and idiosyncrasies.
Sexual Violence and speak-out movements from the margins: Reclaiming socio-spatial scales.

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University of Sussex, UK

Abstract

The spatial concept of scales serves as a useful framework to understand the role of space and intersectional identities in sexual violence and how the interaction of the two can be oppressive in nature as also offer liberatory possibilities.

With its origins in the work of Lefebvre (1974), Neil Smith’s (1992, 1993) ‘scales’ considers various geographies—be it the body, community, nation, global—as boundaries within which intersectional inequalities are defined as well as contested, and can thus limit as well as empower (Valentine, 2001). My research draws upon speak-out movements from the margins of rural India in the wake of #MeTooIndia, movements that were erased from the mainstream discourse. I demonstrate how such grassroots social movements use scalar strategies, that bring to the fore the mutually constitutive nature of different spaces, to surpass their geographical limitations and challenge the dominant socio-spatial order. I argue that the speak-outs obliterate shame and help process trauma at the scale of survivors’ bodies, and at the scale of their communities, pave the way for practices of transformative justice. Unlike prisons that offer "geographical solution to socio-economic problems" (Gilmore, 1999, p. 174), retraumatize survivors, and disproportionately incarcerate marginalized communities, transformative justice is not about redressing isolated acts of sexual violation but addressing the systems that produce impunity and marginalization. By deconstructing the dialectic role of intersectionality and space in constituting and contesting sexual oppressions at different scales, my research attempts to reimagine transnational solidarities in the fight against sexual violence and root it in an understanding of radical grassroots movements of the marginalized in the geo-political South.
The pandemic as a social experiment and experience in alternative food networks: Insights on the Argentine case

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic not only reframed the existing food marketing circuits, it also was a laboratory of new experiences and behaviours. The need to restrict displacements increased the search for alternative food supplies circuits such as vegetable box schemes contracted online; it modified food practices, leading to the rediscovery and trial of new food items, and to a process of experimenting new ways of cooking thanks to the greater proportion of time spent within the household. Some of these changes sedimented over time, while others were abandoned.

This paper aims to reflect in the light of the theory of practices, on the interplay between routine and innovation; especially on those behaviours that involve/d the construction of new links that could strengthen an alternative agri-food system. Key texts will be considered, as well as preliminary findings of a research carried out both in the context of the implementation of the measures of social isolation in Argentina and in the situation of flexibilization initiated by the end of 2021. In this direction, I will present data obtained from qualitative interviews with managers and consumers of these circuits in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. Different analytical dimensions will be considered, including spatiality and displacements, which were precisely challenged by the measures taken by governments in front of the pandemic.
Fixing ghosts: photography as a process of coastal reimagining

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Abstract

Areas of the North Norfolk coast are subject to rapid erosion, causing spaces to fluctuate and defy the practice of fixing them into stability. Within these fluctuating spaces, Spectral Shores, a doctoral practice led research project, attempts to fix states of this space through the practice of photography, both digital images built via pixels and programming and analogue methods that rely on the chemical process of light reacting to sensitised surfaces.

This paper explores the development of a methodology based on phenomenological and auto-ethnographic methods, with the camera acting as a tool of transliteration of these encounters between human and nonhuman. Stemming from the researcher's perspective as a lifelong resident of an unstable coastal area, methodology and experience force a shift in practice away from documenting broken cliffs to using photography to engage with these eroding spaces anew, as “the photograph does not allow us to know for sure, but is an apparatus built for looking, for thinking, and for speculating” (Woolridge, 2021).

Building on Zylinska’s work on nonhuman photography and exploring the potential of “photography as a life shaping force” (Zylinska, 2017), the camera becomes a tool of reimagination. Unstable coastal landscapes become places where the interconnection between human and nonhuman can be experienced and speculated upon, allowing for a reframing of time within a cosmic scale, while bearing witness to the sites where coastlines become haunted by the ghosts of the past and the spectre of an anthropogenic future through the process of image making.
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**Toxic and harmful or as essential as water? Approaching Radio Spectrum as voluminous and multiple**

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**Abstract**

The radio spectrum is a natural entity which underpins much of everyday life from the signal on our phones to the Wi-Fi on our laptops and the music on the radio. The radio waves within this section of the spectrum are ubiquitous yet due to their imperceptibility raise questions about how they should be understood, and in turn who decides how they should be understood. This paper seeks to explore the ways in which the radio spectrum is approached as voluminous, multiple, and unfolding. The radio spectrum has been drawn into different cultural, historical, and popular understandings of the otherworldly, the aether, spectres, and the unknown. At the same time its use in technologies means it is defined, demarcated, and rendered knowable. These differing understandings of radio spectrum means it is pulled in different directions most prominently in the debate about the safety of radio waves. From one perspective the radio spectrum is a carefully managed entity, which at the appropriate power levels forms a useful infrastructure which causes no harm to people; whereas from a more marginal perspective, people claim to sense these radio waves and experience their presence through bodily reactions including nausea, tinnitus, depression, and heart palpitations. Drawing on contested understandings of the radio spectrum this paper aims to unpack how people think through this voluminous entity as that which is fixed yet uncertain, and constantly present yet imperceptible.
‘How does one get better?’ Untangling the ‘therapeutic’ of everyday ‘therapeutic landscape’ experiences

Andy Harrod
Lancaster University, UK

Abstract

Green social prescribing aims to connect people to nature-based activities that matters to them and support them in taking ‘greater control of their health’. Whilst numerous studies demonstrate the short-term benefits of engaging with nature-based activities, the longevity of these effects on a person’s wellbeing are still to be established. As well as if attending nature-based activities influence peoples’ long-term actions and practices to support their wellbeing.

My PhD focuses on peoples’ encounters with nature-based activities and the influence of these on their wellbeing over time. My methods combined interviews and creative activities to develop a detailed life history account of peoples’ experiences of nature-based activities and their wellbeing. Drawing on a range of examples from the co-produced data, I will discuss how nature-based activities can provide individualised transformative experiences. I will focus on participants’ shifts in how they relate to their self and developed affective practices and spaces, which informs a personalised way of being for the long-term maintenance and enhancement of their wellbeing. I will then consider the role of participants’ long-term nature-based wellbeing practices when they negotiate disruptions, which have the potential to diminish their wellbeing.

I will finish by considering the implications for social prescribing policy, focusing on the calls for evaluating the efficiency and cost effectiveness of social prescribing by using a series of standardised metrics and measures. The use of standardised evaluations can miss the nuances of people’s experiences. As such there can be a tension between how programmes are experienced and how they are evaluated. Research conducted through the lens of ‘therapeutic landscapes’ has the potential to disrupt these reductionist approaches to evaluation and do justice to participants experiences of social prescribing by recognising the contextual complexities of therapeutic experiences of nature-based activities.
From City Brain to Super Brain: Chinese artificial intelligence governance platforms 2.0

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Abstract

Since Alibaba launched its artificial intelligence (AI) governance platform in Hangzhou in 2016, city grain has grown into an urban management and governance concept more than a product owned by Alibaba as other technology companies design and sell their own platforms to local governments across China and beyond. By reviewing and analyzing official documents and state-media articles, we seek to highlight two national ambitions associated with the expansion of city brain. First, city brain is encouraged to help with different levels of governance and hence generate updated and precise data from the province level to the lowest, grassroot community/village level. Second, while tech giants such as Alibaba, Tencent, and Huawei are supported to take the lead in design and operation, smaller companies are expected to be involved so that city brain is not exclusive to a handful of big companies. In this paper, we also discuss the uncertainties in AI platforms created by the friction between China and the United States in the past few years. Given these observations, we argue that city brain as a prominent AI platform is not only political but also geopolitical.
Vertical Nationalism: Welsh national and cultural identity atop Yr Wyddfa/Snowdon

Daniel Bos
University of Chester, UK

Abstract

This paper argues that greater attention needs to be given to vertical territory, and how it communicates and (re)makes national and cultural identities. In doing so, I bring together political geography’s interest in nationalism with more recent geographical interests in the volumetric qualities of territory to consider how national and cultural identities are displayed, performed, and encountered in (and beyond) the vertical spaces of mountains. I focus attention on Yr Wyddfa/ Snowdon. As the highest mountain in Wales, Yr Wyddfa has been defined as an enduring stronghold of Welsh national identity and attracts over 500,000 tourists annually to ascend the summit. Drawing on archival research, this paper will trace the longer, variable historical motives and experiences of reaching the summit. In particular, the paper will draw attention to the role of Welsh folklore and language towards place-making, the study of the mountain as an object of scientific and environmental curiosity, and the emergent tourist industry in the 19th Century and the nationalistic encounters this facilitated, to uncover the varying understanding of volumetric words, and their implications for collective political identities.
The “More than Maps” framework for building capacity among young people in coastal adaptation research

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Abstract

The low-lying coastal zone is home to around 10% of the global population and contains abundant resources that contribute to the livelihoods of many. Coastal communities are particularly exposed to sea level rise which increases the precarity of ecological and socioeconomic interests on the coast. The challenges posed by coastal hazards and the increasing risks driven by climate change require an interdisciplinary and collaborative research approach. The COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges of how to deliver research training to young people interested in better understanding the complexities of the coast.

The “More than Maps” framework builds on nearly two years of work (2020-2022) carried out by an interdisciplinary team of early career researchers and established academics to produce online and in-person workshops on coastal adaptation research methods to a range of “young” audiences: high school students, university students and early-career professionals. Young people are not just climate activists; they are a generation who are and will continue to be impacted by climate change. We aimed to support them as decision-makers by increasing their coastal adaptation research skills, and built and delivered a package of fifteen workshops led by research institutions across the United Kingdom, Ghana, Jamaica and Australia on both the physical and human geography of coastal environments, using open access and freely accessible materials.

Using data from the workshops’ design and delivery, we have developed an easily scaleable framework to aid other researchers seeking to share open-access, replicable methods by which to study coastal change and adaptation. Preliminary analysis of results show that workshop participants have increased confidence, seek to apply to other contexts, and want to share with others the methods they learned. We conclude that the COVID-19 online workspace facilitated rather than hindered both the international collaboration and workshop delivery of these coastal adaptation research methods workshops.
Cancer drug designing; in silico outcomes eliciting in vitro analysis

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Abstract

Pollution and saturation of the environment with complexes of chemical diversity result in the presence of carcinogens. The impact of carcinogenic molecules effect a range of disorders and diseases including cancers. Naturally prevention is better than cure, though the prolific modular spread of effected domains of proteins has evoked different treatments to lessen the cancerous spread. Surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy are invasive techniques which counter cancer, though often result in death of the infected hosts. Targeted therapy and drug resistance lead research, although molecular-intracellular mechanisms largely remain unknown. Genetically, Src homology region 2-containing protein tyrosine phosphatase 2 (SHP2) is associated with leukaemia, breast, liver, lung, laryngeal, gastric, oral and other cancer types. Blocking of SHP2 causes senescence and arrests cancer growth. Designing a novel inhibitory compound (NIC) to bind to SHP2 inhibits its activity. The designer uses chemical simulation and sequencing software tools; binding energy, inhibition constant, precise interactive location and aspect may be determined. Interactions will be explored using a protein ligand interaction profiler (PLIP). Further target verification may be carried out using cell cultures. NIC and SHP2 possible binding was verified, binding energy was determined and interactions were explored using a PLIP. Molecular docking software provided potential binding and energy, secondary screening will be carried out using cell cultures, cell viability assays and molecular techniques. In vivo disease modelling will reveal the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) and achieve a profile of inhibitory concentrations in biological systems. Application of generative and functional mathematics may be employed to provide further confirmation.
Food bank practices: moving beyond sticking plasters

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Abstract

I will present some findings from a collaborative BA/Leverhulme small grant project (drawing on repeat interviews with food bank co-ordinators) and will be joined by practitioners who will give their perspective. Referrals to VCOs providing food assistance increase year on year, raising important questions about organisational capacity, the desirability of transactional models and welfare provision for vulnerable service users. The diversification of provision poses significant challenges to local authorities seeking to implement strategic approaches. It is important to understand the experiences of former industrial regions, particularly given the ongoing impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the cost-of-living crisis. Northumberland (a large, diverse county of former mining, fishing, tourist, agricultural, rural and new settlements) is representative of such regions and within which provision has begun to mature and diversify. Little is known about how organisations are seeking to diversify and expand into other areas of social infrastructure (welfare provision and advice, community development, education etc) or the rationales and competing agendas at work and the potential impacts on vulnerable populations. A decade on from the implementation of austerity and the discourse of the ‘Big Society’ (and the longer run of neoliberalism), and via the on-going fallout of Brexit and Covid 19, the current Conservative government is seeking to continue the shifting of responsibility (and liability) onto already disadvantaged communities and regions feeling the significant strain of low incomes, insecure work and underfunded public services (see New Social Covenant, 2021 as an example of this approach). As Janet Poppendieck has restated (in the context of Covid 19), “Hunger, food insecurity, is fundamentally an income problem, not a food problem.” (Poppendieck, 2020).
The stratigraphic extraction of value: a volumetric reading of urban redevelopment in the West End of London

Donald McNeill
University of Sydney, Australia

Abstract

This paper seeks to contribute to a range of recent works about the nature of capitalist urban development and the volumetric shape of cities. Empirically, it considers the political economy of London’s Crossrail express underground system, and the concomitant large-scale redevelopment of an area of London proximate to the newly expanded Tottenham Court Road station. This redevelopment is marked by three things: first, the conversion of the area’s Centrepoint tower from office to high-value residential use; second, the reorganisation of the surface of London’s streets, led by a series of private developers and the New West End Company business advocacy firm; third, a controversial redevelopment of underground space, as the Crossrail tunnelling and station concourse development impacted on existing uses, such as the noted Astoria music venue.

The paper thus further contributes to debates in contemporary urbanism about the nature of city levels, and the valorisation of hitherto marginal urban space. To analyse what these changes entailed for the area, this paper seeks to develop what a ‘stratigraphic’ approach might bring to understanding the volumes of the redevelopment. It takes what some see as the three key horizontal planes: height and verticality, with a particular reference to luxury property development; surface, or ground, which many see as the hermeneutic key for understanding the very nature of urbanity; and underground, which as an integral part of city life has been a key element of urban modernity.
Buying time on the North Norfolk coast

Martin Mahony, Rosalind Bark, Sophie Day, Irene Lorenzoni, Trevor Tolhurst
University of East Anglia, UK

Abstract

Concerted anticipatory action requires some form of institutionally stabilised imaginary of desirable or acceptable futures (Jasanoff and Kim 2015). But what happens when no such imaginary exists? Amid uncertainty about the direction of national government policy on coastal protection and climate change adaptation, the Bacton to Walcott Sandscaping Scheme in northeast Norfolk has ‘bought time’ for local communities and authorities to re-consider and re-imagine their futures under climate change. That time cost £19m – the price of pumping 1.8m cubic metres of sand from the bed of the North Sea onto the beachfronts of Bacton and Walcott – with the funds coming from public and private sources, most notably the operators of the Bacton Gas Terminal, through which the UK receives about one-third of its natural gas. Drawing on archival and documentary analysis, interviews with key stakeholders as well as a wider resident survey conducted just before the launch of the scheme in 2019, this paper examines the hopes, fears and imaginaries of socio-environmental futures in this corner of the rapidly eroding Norfolk coast. It explores the intersection of different timescales of change and sources of uncertainty – concerning coastal policy, the future of the fossil fuel industry and the behaviour of the sand itself – in the emergence of new, provisional imaginaries of coastal futures. In so doing the paper seeks to contribute to emerging geographical work on the temporalities and socioecological entanglements of contemporary sandscapes (e.g. Kothari and Arnall 2020; Jamieson 2021), and to work on the emotional worlds of climate change adaptation (e.g. Head 2016; Davidson 2018).
AI Doctors and Covid-19 Contact Tracing Solutions in the Governance of Urban Health

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Abstract

Digital agents are becoming an increasingly significant force in the governance of cities. This is particularly noticeable in China where immaterial artificial intelligences are managing and mediating several urban services. This presentation has a threefold focus. First, empirically it focuses specifically on urban software agents i.e. urban AIs that do not have a physical body but that exist and operate as pure software. Second, geographically the focus is on China which is a country at the forefront of urban AI, where a number of urban software agents are regularly employed in urban governance. Third, thematically the presentation focuses on public health and the governance of health in cities. In particular, the presentation examines two health-related categories of urban software agents operating in China: AI doctors and Covid-19 contact tracing solutions. AI doctors are digital doctors capable of assessing medical symptoms, which Chinese citizens can engage with remotely, while contact tracing solutions have been used extensively in Chinese cities during the Covid-19 crisis to monitor the health and mobility of citizens. Overall, by critically examining the use of AI doctors and contact tracing apps in Chinese cities, this presentation offers an in-depth empirical analysis of the emergence of urban software agents in the governance of urban health.
Seabirds in the city: urban futures and fraught coexistence

Helen Wilson
University of Durham, UK

Abstract

At a time when seabird populations have experienced steep declines and the movement of diverse species into cities has become a globally important issue, the paper examines the contested presence of an urban seabird colony in North East England. Drawing on ethnographic research, the paper details how avian claims to space have prompted fraught debates on coexistence, urban planning, and socio-environmental futures that reveal an inherently ambivalent politics. While normally a coastal breeding bird, the paper argues that the Tyne kittiwakes – and their use of window ledges, drain-pipes, streetlights, rooftops and road infrastructure – have become a part of the region’s urban life. However, while their presence has reworked understandings of public space, urban belonging, and oceanic boundaries, urban regimes of control and normative notions of the city continue to inhibit a more expansive urban politics capable of accommodating difference and responding to environmental change. Through attention to practices of deterrence, shifting forms of urban decision-making, and the emergence of the kittiwake as a regional icon, the paper documents the conditions that limit coexistence despite a change in attitudes towards the colony and environmental futures more broadly. In this context, the paper raises fundamental questions about how to support coexistence amid ambivalence without resorting to normative forms of species valorisation. By attending to ambivalence and the difficulty of creating and sustaining ethical modes of coexistence, the paper finishes by reflecting on the implications of the research for urban futures, local geographies of the sea, and the multispecies city.
Recovering futurity: Cultivating doubt in agri-food system governing

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Abstract

Drawing on UK and European experiences, I argue that mainstream food systems have been shaped over decades by cycles of emergency-response-recovery common to contemporary liberal government (Anderson and Adey, 2011; Anderson, 2016). Supply chains have been prominent in this process as both source of emergence and vehicle for modes of anticipation, response and recovery now centred on the maintenance of food integrity (Donaldson et al, 2020). Among food-chain actors this process has curtailed a wider sense of possibility not only in how to respond, but also in what needs responding to (what counts as emergency), and the object of recovery. Emergency, then, might not be the best register for food geographers looking to make direct interventions that address recovery from the manifold problems in which mainstream food-chains are implicated (climate and ecological breakdown, poverty, precarity and injustice). There is a pressing need to recover a more open futurity within food system governance. As a possible starting point for this process I outline some observed forms of hesitation in the face of uncertainty that can accompany emergencies, suggesting that one of these - doubt (sometimes connected to crisis as judgement or turning point) - might form the basis of a more experimental futurity.
A Volumetric Political Ecology of Atmospheres

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Abstract

Emerging scholarship in the social sciences has begun to explore the potential of thinking volumetrically in relation to territory. In so doing, it has convincingly challenged traditional, taken-for-granted surficial modes of analysis, by integrating greater consideration of the subterranean and above ground. Applying this volumetric lens to the subfield of political ecology, this paper develops an interdisciplinary ecology of atmospheres. It uses the Guiana Shield, a highly forested geological formation in the north of South America, as a spatial point of reference for examining the ever-evolving interplay of atmospheric spaces in-between that blanket and shape all things. Building on a social scientific, multi-sited ethnography of avoided deforestation initiatives taking place in the Guiana Shield combined with a humanities-driven awareness of the multiple meanings of the English word ‘weather’ in both its noun and verb forms, this paper analyzes the geological, biological, and socio-political processes through which atmospheres, including climate changed ones, emerge, and go on to encompass their reference points. The conception of atmospheres I develop further integrates an awareness of ecological processes into political ecology, a tradition accused of often assuming the centrality of the ‘political’ in investigating ecological change.
Indigenous Traditional Knowledge enabling a certain panacea in uncertain times

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Abstract

The world population faces a plethora of ecological and health problems. There is a need to restore our culture and indigenous practices to face contemporary and future global challenges and cooperatively mitigate ecological and health risks. Site visits were made from January 2021 to April 2022. Documentation and cataloguing of the Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK) of plants used by the Kisan, Oram, Munda and Bhuian tribal communities of Bonai Forest Division, Odisha, India was collated and analyzed for health and environmental qualities. Baseline data was observed to develop a panacea for diseases and disorders including solutions for ecological security. Results revealed that the practices embellish an illustrative path with the capacity for lessening or solving ecological and health-care problems. Future directions of this work are to qualify national natural diseases and disorders, represent and monitor ITK in order to apply solutions which restore health and ecosystem harmony.
Negotiating Displacement and Centering Agency in New Development: Present day approaches in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Seattle in the context of the progressive era state.

Vinita Goyal
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Abstract

Community-based efforts around advancing shared equity housing that includes community land trusts and limited equity cooperatives, rooted in permanent affordability and democratic control, underrepresented in the grand bargain initiatives of CASA (Bay Area) and HALA (Seattle), are radical alternatives emerging in these regions also. Here, ownership of property is building people’s power and alliances and adding new dimensions (within the contemporary struggle for inhabitation) to traditional forms of tenant organizing and resistance.

Looking at the social and political landscape of shared equity housing and other progressive housing solutions emerging in Berkeley, Oakland, San Jose, San Francisco (in the San Francisco Bay Area) and Seattle—the different urban contexts where I have both lived and worked— comparing it to the context of state led solutions in the 1970s and in 1980s, the paper, following the positionality of my own lived experience, explores the contradictions within a progressive state and theorizes an evolution of an empathetic state and society overall.

In the latter regard, the paper attempts to layer Cahen’s, Schneider’s, and Saegart’s concepts (2019) of ‘invented’ and ‘invited spaces’ of collective action with ideas on empathy, thereby expanding invented spaces to include broader grassroots movement building spaces.

“In the US urban context, we argue that invitations from the state and allied institutions are rarely received outright: the invited spaces in which gains can be made must first be invented by the grassroots. Conversely, inventive organizing must find its invitations, the material conditions allowing for new creations”.

For the convergence to happen, for victories to be secured, following the “formulations and counter formulations” between the invented and invited spaces, my hypothesis states that the invited spaces are evolving and progressing from a state of “Empathy as Charity” to “Empathy as Stimulus”.

Finally layering with my own current work, now in direct transit democracy, the paper concludes with the third space of “Empathy as Patience” to stoke community resistance absent in communities like Bayview-Hunters Point in San Francisco based on my knowledge and directive at hand.
Urban AI reinvigorating the cyborg city - robots and humans coping with crisis

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Abstract

Recent developments in AI and machine learning have made it possible to deploy robots in cities. Initial experiments already demonstrate considerable transformative potential as urban robots deliver technological capabilities and capacities beyond human abilities and existing infrastructural possibilities. Such urban developments call for increased attention to the ways in which they become embedded in contingent configurations that include not only robots but also humans, institutions, infrastructures and the myriad of entities and encounters that constitute the urban. We draw on case study research focused on grocery delivery robots in an urban setting to investigate the cyborg urbanisms which emerge from the intensification of robotic and human interactions in unscripted, unpredictable urban contexts.

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic rendered simple tasks such as visiting the supermarket to shop for groceries unsafe due to the high risk of contagion. In Milton Keynes (a city located in South East of England) the “Starship” robot grocery delivery service, became a safe way to complete this task, one which at the time was potentially too dangerous for humans. The impacts of Covid19 and disruption to everyday life thus draw attention to renewed intensities of cyborg urbanism arising from robot-human interactions in certain urban contexts, with advances in AI and robotics reaching a threshold, anticipated by the founders of cybernetics, with potential to transform urban life.
Deliberative approaches to the climate crisis: Adapting climathons for rural livestock farming communities

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Abstract

The climate crisis is a pressing challenge for rural regions, which face severe consequences from extreme weather events and are the subject of conflicting visions regarding what constitutes sustainable land management. There is a growing body of research drawing on deliberative approaches, such as the use of citizens’ assemblies, to build democratic participation around the challenging policy choices presented by climate change. However, citizens’ assemblies are costly in terms of both time and money. More agile approaches may provide benefits in these areas, but risk having fewer tangible outcomes. In this research, we applied an agile approach that had previously been used mainly in urban settings, coordinating climathons in two rural English counties. Cornwall and Cumbria were chosen due to their contrasting features, and their similarly high proportion of land used for ruminant livestock farming. We sought to bring a range of rural stakeholders together, to envision and discuss how land use in their region could be optimised to achieve net zero. With extensive input from local stakeholders, we adapted the “Climathon Playbook” for rural settings, creating a programme that would be farmer-friendly and facilitate maximum engagement. Our team incorporated digital storytelling, which aimed to foreground local voices in the events and ensure that busy livestock farmers had the opportunity to be listened to. During a period of intensive deliberation and exchange, participants worked on a range of projects to develop locally relevant net zero solutions. In this paper, we discuss the process of adapting the methodology to rural settings, how it sits conceptually in relation to existing approaches, and share our lessons learned regarding best practice and potential pitfalls. Overall, we assess the potential for climathons to increase democratic participation to address the climate crisis.
Place, politics and the robotic automation of cities

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Abstract

There is growing interest in, and experimentation with, robotics in the public realm of cities in the form of drones, service robots and autonomous vehicles (and more) to serve interests in policing, surveillance, security, logistics and mobility management. In this paper we explore the emergence and multiple logics of urban robotics in the reworking and reordering of social, political and environmental relations in cities. The central question posed by the paper is what matters and why as geographers engage with the extended application of robotics and what that might mean for a politics of urban robotics and its theorisation.
Hammertown, Milltown and beyond: Re-imagining the relationship between place and class in youth transitions research

Laura Fenton
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Abstract

Ethnographic and qualitative studies of youth transitions are set in specific places. Like research participants, these places are often given pseudonyms. ‘Classic’ studies focussed on the transitions of working-class youth – usually young men – have used fictionalised town names. More recent research has contrasted youth transitions in different ‘types’ of places characterised by diverging socioeconomic profiles. These approaches configure place as both specific and generic, that is, as having an identifiable (often industrial) past and socioeconomic character but also as one site that fits within a wider category made up of interchangeable units. A case study orientation to place is adopted because ‘place as case’ enables similarities and differences in youth transitions to be identified across sites. Configuring place as fictional or nameless also fits with requirements around confidentiality. However, positioning place in this way has implications for how we understand socio-spatial processes within sites; it risks homogenising places and shifting attention away from the multiplicities and complexities of age, generation, class, race and gender. Moreover, the idea of ‘place as case’ clashes with the senses of place conveyed by research participants, who tend to experience place as unique and as connected in non-replicable ways with relationships, identities and biographies. This paper addresses tensions in how studies of youth transitions conceptualise place and its relationship to class, arguing for places to be treated as the complex characters they are held to be by those inhabiting them.
Comparing Shia and Sunni geographies of ‘everyday Islamistness’ in Greater Beirut

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Abstract

How do ordinary people make sense of and navigate the interplay between religion, politics and socio-economic relations? How do their everyday practices in turn shape these relations? What role, if any, does sectarian difference play in this? And what are the spatialities and temporalities of these relationships?

The focus of this paper is ‘everyday Islamistness’ – the varied ways in which Muslims who see in Islam a blueprint for society connect their religio-political beliefs and practices to ‘social relations, economic structures and practices, and informal interactions saturated in power relations’ (Schwedler 2018). While research on Islamist movements as the most visible embodiment of political Islam has proliferated over the last four decades, research on everyday Islamism and how this is experienced and practised by ordinary people is far less advanced. Furthermore, although a spatial approach to Islamism is growing, this remains limited. Both these limitations raise questions about how ordinary Muslims construct and navigate religio-political beliefs and practices in space. Moreover, Islamism studies has been overwhelmingly Sunni-centric, with little exploration of possible variations between Shia and Sunni Islamists (Valbjørn and Gunning 2021), let alone between Islamist and non-Islamist sectarian Shia or Sunni parties.

To map the spatialities and temporalities of everyday Islamistness, we will use participatory place-based digital storytelling to capture situated, multi-perspectival narratives of everyday practices, which engage critically with surroundings (Marshall, Smaira and Staeheli, 2021; Nicley, 2009; Marshall et al., 2017). Working with local youth volunteers, our research will focus on two urban areas in Greater Beirut: predominantly Sunni Tariq al-Jdideh, where the sectarian Sunni Future Movement is dominant, with limited activity by Sunni Islamists, and predominantly Shia Ghobeiry, where the Shia Islamist party Hizbullah dominates, alongside the sectarian Shia Amal movement.
Soil nematode communities of the Lesser Himalayas: megadiverse agro-ecological development

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Abstract

Drastic change in climate ultimately affects soil health and is heightened in biodiverse areas of extreme gradients, thus effecting soil biodiversity in the Himalayan region. This previously unsurveyed region requires investigation of diversity of soil nematodes; free living (FLN) and plant parasitic groups (PPN) present in vegetation of the region to show their relationships with soil physicochemical parameters (pH, moisture content, nitrogen, soil organic matter and soil organic carbon). Samples were taken randomly from four sub-sampling sites in ten districts using the Southy method. Nematodes were isolated by Cobb sieving, decantation and modified Bearmann’s funnel techniques. Community indices of each vegetation-type were calculated; principal component analysis (PCA) and multiblock partial least squares (MBPLS) were performed. MBPLS analysis illustrated associations of organic-matter and nitrogen content with mixed-cropping and pH in soil with grassland, alpine-forests and shrubland, bacterivores were positively correlated with organic-matter and nitrogen content. Negative correlations (pH, moisture content, organic carbon) were seen in a few fungivore and PPN genera. Correspondence analysis showed nematode contribution in substrates; impacts of substrate origin on genera distribution. *Ditylenchus, Aphelenchoides, Prodorylaimus, Laimydorus, Dorylaimellus,* and *Aphelenchus* were related to grassland, shrub, herbaceous and tree soils. *Rhabpanus, Diplogastritus, Leptolaimus, Teratorhabditus, Diploscapteroides* were related to mixed-cropping, mono-cropping and garden-soils. Cropping systems, mixed cropping or organic practices of cultivation improve nematode community structure and functional diversity. Altitude, soil nutrients, physicochemical factors and vegetation of the Himalayan region affects diversity and abundance of soil nematode communities. Implementing agro-ecological development requires an ecologically considered approach especially in megadiverse locations.
Urban Intelligences in complex times- AI, robots and autonomous systems coping with disruption, risk and uncertainty in the city (Panel Discussion)

Matthew Cook\textsuperscript{1}, Federico Cugurullo\textsuperscript{2}, Simon Marvin\textsuperscript{3}, Shanti Sumartojo\textsuperscript{4}, Aidan While\textsuperscript{3}
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Abstract

Innovation in artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming cities in unprecedented ways. Robots are increasingly managing key urban services, performing jobs that were once the exclusive domain of humans, and maintaining cities’ infrastructure. Self-driving cars are reshaping urban transport systems, thereby triggering new mobilities and impacting on the design of the built environment. City brains and digital platforms are gradually taking control of urban governance, operating entire urban systems ranging from health to transport and from security to ecosystems. Meanwhile, through mobile apps and personal computers, invisible software agents are deciding on who has to be in quarantine and who will get a mortgage.

The urban changes associated with AI are challenging to grasp in empirical and theoretical terms. There are many different types of AI landing in heterogeneous urban spaces. Artificial intelligences simultaneously reconfigure urban environments and are reconfigured by them. As such, AI urbanism is not a linear process, but rather a multiform and geographically sensitive phenomenon which is destabilizing the material and immaterial fabric of cities. Importantly, the mutually constitutive relations between AIs and urban contexts are also inflected by contingency, as human and artificial intelligences jointly make sense of a complex and uncertain world, respond to the unexpected, and cope with disruption.

The aim of this panel is to stimulate debate drawing on a range of urban disciplines to explore in theory and practice how AI intersects with the city, disrupting some aspects of urban life and sustaining others, in the attempt to understand the repercussions that AI is having on urban society, urban infrastructure, urban governance, urban planning, urban economy and urban sustainability.
The Future of Mobility May Have Arrived, But Who is Going to Deliver It?

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Abstract

The last decade has seen growing demands on local authority transport departments. Government policies for Net Zero have led to the Transport Decarbonisation Plan and Bus Back Better in 2021. Local authorities (LA) are now expected to undertake entirely new activities, such as coordinate the securing of public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (EV), as well as take a more proactive role in designing and delivering bus networks. As part of regional groupings of local authorities, they must monitor and manage down carbon emissions from private actors over which they have no direct control. The ‘Future of Mobility’, through initiatives such as Mobility-as-a-Service and ‘smart’ infrastructure management, expects them to engage more intensely and in new ways with data. Delivering efficiently against this wide and deep agenda will require local authorities that are enabled to respond effectively to local circumstances and opportunities. However, Ladner et al. (2016) found the UK to exhibit relatively low LA autonomy, whilst the regional tier of governance in England has rarely been present and never strong.

Two key factors in LA’s ability to deliver policy are ‘Capacity and Capability’ (C&C): essentially relating to the staff resource available and the skills and expertise that can be applied. This review paper identifies key areas of capability enhancement needs relating to new skills, new knowledge, and specialist support. A key tension lies between how far to encourage the support of local authorities through outsourcing (potentially most effective in the short-run) and how far to re-develop transport officers’ own skills through training. Capacity also remains a problem in the context of short-term project-based funding and small staff teams.

It is concluded that potential solutions do exist: for example, roving expert teams could provide surge capacity for EV charging and bus network planning, and there are real prospects that investment in higher technology, for example to automate infrastructure auditing, could reduce capacity constraints. However, if C&C deficits are not addressed then the delivery of more sustainable mobility will be threatened, particularly where expectations do not come with a statutory obligation, such as delivering EV charging.
The many meanings of menstruation: mothers and daughters as agents of resistance in Lusaka

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Abstract

The menstrual lives of young women in the global South have emerged as topics of interest among development agencies, leading to the implementation of Menstrual Hygiene Management programmes in schools. With these programmes as backdrop, this paper considers young women's menarche and menstruation experiences and practices. The paper is based on photovoice research with a group of 22 school students living and studying in George and Chawama, two of the fastest growing settlements of Lusaka. We analyze these data through an engagement with the work of feminist geographers to argue that students and their mothers navigate uncertain and precarious everyday realities by means of creative and complex strategies. This paper makes three contributions to scholarship. First, it increases understanding on challenges related to menarche and menstruation by looking through the eyes of students themselves. That is, by exploring their own contexts, views, and expectations. Second, it contributes to the field of critical menstruation studies which has highlighted how Menstrual Hygiene Management tends to feed imaginaries of women and girls of Global South as unable of managing their own monthly blood, disregarding their traditional menstrual practices, cultures and socio-economic contexts. Third, it extends conceptual work in feminist geography more broadly through an analysis that recognizes mothers and daughters as agents of resistance in the face of patriarchal and neoliberal economic realities.
Insects as an alternative source of protein: exploring the potential for growth of the Thai edible insect industry

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Abstract
The global market for edible insects is expanding rapidly as a result of the quest for more sustainable protein sources. Edible insects can enter human food chains directly, in whole or ground powder form, and indirectly as a source of animal feed. Thailand is the world’s largest producer of edible insects, with more than 20,000 insect producing enterprises generating an average annual output of 7,500 tons, mainly supplying domestic markets (Halloran et al., 2017; Durst and Hanboonsong, 2015). There is potential for the Thai edible insect industry to grow considerably through exports to overseas markets. Based upon collaborative research in Thailand, the UK and the EU, this paper explores the challenges and opportunities confronting the Thai edible insect industry as it seeks to expand its export markets. Internal challenges include the need to develop regulatory processes and systems which ensure compatibility with international standards and certifications. Externally, there are challenges created within potential markets. Consumer tastes and preferences are one factor but more importantly the status of edible insects as a ‘novel food’ within UK and EU regulatory systems creates complex barriers which must be overcome before edible insects can become a significant component of the mainstream food system. Our paper will evaluate the fast-moving regulatory terrain within the UK and EU and illustrate the steps being undertaken in Thailand to achieve export readiness within these potentially lucrative markets. The research illustrates the complexities of international trade in ‘novel foods’, in particular the contested role of certifications and standards.

References


GROWING UP GLOBAL AT HOME. MIDDLE-CLASSED REPROTOPIAS IN GLOBAL ENTANGLEMENTS

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Abstract

While it is common sense that childhood is a generational and therefore temporal order, aspects of its spatial production have been rather neglected and so have been children as actors in all kinds of spatial discourse. Moreover, in globalization research reproductive topologies remain largely unnoticed because they seem to be limited to local scales. A relational understanding of space however shows how children are positioned and position themselves within analogue and virtual topologies that are increasingly (re-)produced within multi-scalar entanglements.

If we look at the ways in which children in Nairobi and Berlin are growing up generally, we will find livelihoods that are hard to compare. But if we sharpen the lens towards a class-oriented perspective, we will encounter “strange familiarities” (Katz 2004) that entangle and relate the disparate lives of two middle-class children from Nairobi and Berlin which are both growing up in semi-detached single-family homes. We will also find that there is not one global, but multiple “situated globalities” (Blok 2010).

In this paper I discuss how a class-sensitive mobile ethnography calls against “methodological nationalism” (Beck 1997) and aims to counter dominant cultural narratives and cartographic depictions of the so-called Global South and North and their dualistic childhood concepts respectively. I argue that class matters and that researching classed topologies of childhood and social reproduction (reprotoias) from a biographical perspective can contribute towards grasping the of complex re-figurations of (city)spaces under the global condition (global capitalism) and help to open Eurocentric concepts such as class beyond national containers.
Perceptions of milk alternatives in contemporary urban India

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Abstract

Milk has long-standing cultural significance within the traditional Indian diet. It is not only prevalent in many Indian cuisines, but is also an integral material component of several Hindu socio-cultural practices. Today, India’s levels of milk consumption are among the highest in the world. Over the coming decades, milk consumption and production in India are predicted to increase as the country moves from small-scale farming to more intensive modes of factory farming. Previous work has highlighted numerous environmental and ethical challenges associated with intensive dairy production in India today. In view of these challenges, the objective of our study was to explore Indian consumer attitudes towards milk alternatives and vegan dietary practices. Our study uses Shove et al.’s model of social practice theory and draws upon a sample of 33 Mumbai residents aged 23-45 years. Semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were the main mode of data collection, supplemented by observations in Indian markets, restaurants, and local neighbourhoods. In summary, the findings highlighted that perceptions towards milk alternatives were somewhat mixed. Some viewed these alternatives as beneficial for addressing specific health concerns and problems associated with animal welfare. On the other hand, these foods were not seen as suitable material alternatives for everyday dietary and cultural practices. They were also described to have poor sensory appeal. This paper further elaborates upon Indian consumer views towards milk alternatives and veganism. As part of our discussion, we cover barriers, opportunities and potential strategies to encourage more sustainable dietary practices in India.
Capturing awareness and realisation – artistically approaching the aesthetics of sustainability

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Abstract

Global-warming and environmental desolation generationally fire us into action to mitigate increased emergence of anomalies and extremes. Measures include: protection of systems integrity (sustainability), natural-ecosystems, energy-efficiency, governance and industry-complementation. Awareness is universally accepted as a basic requirement enabling our responsibilities and daily-behaviour. Art and its expression contemporise issues with ambiguous definitions of perception. Art appeals to our quantitative sentiment and qualifying value-judgement. Unconsciously our minds realise and gain awareness. Awareness breeds protection of diversity and beauty; inspires ways of nurturing it, akin to circular-sustainability. Using art to sustain heightened-awareness causes long-term behavioural-change enabling ownership and responsibility for both local and global environment. Multipronged contemporary methods: performing arts, land-art, digital-art, cartoon, impressionist and illustrative art are introduced in daily-life. In order to receive feedback and inclusively make visions available to public, business and governmental members (and allow input from each group) workshops complement dissemination. Current projects focus on understanding soil, watching a growing plant, and showing the effects of contaminants such as plastics. We anticipate awareness and realisation from individuals. Aware individuals affect their work-place, companies, home, children, tutors, employees, students, and loved-ones. Enlightened, bright-minds find ways of fostering and appreciating our planet following their unique perception, driven by embedded conditioning. Creativity is an important human-tool, without it humanity would be dull. Sustaining every resource is possible, including human’s will to live and emotional well-being. Mixtures of emotional sentiment and discrete ‘realised’ blocks of change are linked within symphonies and harmony, embodying our part in the beauty of the Earth.
Perspectives of foreignness: how alternative protein stakeholders in China perceive foreign influence and actors

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Abstract

With the world’s largest population, growing demand for proteins and increasing government attention on food safety, security and sustainability, China represents one of the biggest opportunities for alternative proteins. However, new alternative protein products and the movements that promote them have largely originated outside of China, and primarily from the West. How do alternative protein stakeholders, including consumers and advocates, perceive foreign actors and how might these perceptions impact the development of the field in China?

This presentation consolidates findings from four studies conducted from 2020-2022, investigating the perspectives of Chinese consumers towards alternative protein and the landscape of farmed animal advocacy in China. These studies employed a number of methodologies, including focus groups, diary studies and a national survey of Chinese consumers, as well as semi-structured interviews with civil society, academic and government stakeholders in China. Findings show that stakeholders carry a range of perceptions towards foreign products and actors that fluctuate depending on specific contexts, influencing consumers’ purchase decisions and reactions to campaigns, as well as advocate’s organisational partnerships, donor relations and intervention selection. This presentation aims to highlight key lessons and takeaways for those looking to understand and connect with China’s consumers and alternative protein stakeholders.
Promises and profit in ‘debt-free’ higher education: The geographies of Income Share Agreements in the United States

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Abstract

As student debt in the United States rose to $1.7 trillion USD in 2021, the value and accessibility of higher education has been a subject of fierce public debate. In this context, Income Share Agreements (ISAs) are framed as an alternative to conventional student loans. ISAs entail investors paying a student’s tuition in exchange for a share of the student’s future income. As the use of ISAs increases, especially within US vocational schools, there is evidence that ISAs have used predatory financial practices aimed at marginalized students. Motivated by the rapid growth of ISAs in the United States, and the relative absence of geographic attention to them, this paper discusses their nature and broader significance to geographic debates. Informed by grey literature, news articles, industry documents, and the scant academic writing on ISAs, we discuss the characteristics, histories, and geographies of ISAs before examining the roles and motivations of three involved constituencies: students, higher education institutions, and investment intermediaries. In doing so, we highlight how ISAs reorient who pays for education and when, what sort of education is paid for, and how private markets profit from higher education. We then highlight the broader significance of ISAs to geographical understandings of: (1) the financialization of social reproduction; (2) geographies of education; and (3) digital capitalism. We argue that ISAs’ individuating logics and broader context of social reproductive crises are revealing of a wider trend towards private profit via predatory inclusion, accelerated by financial technologies.
Circular-sustainability, protection of beauty and ownership - complementing the 17 goals

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Abstract

The majority of our human population lives in refined societies, split into various developmental levels; within structures of variable complexity catering for the looped development needs and capacity of resource flow dynamically. Minorities of the population live in remote, disparate and biodiverse locations and are more reliant on natural ecosystem flow than the majority in their every-day lives. The levels of diversity in these ‘hot-spot’ areas are far above all other locales in each of the kingdoms of life. The human communities’ governance appears to be overlooked – both by residents and the countries in which they reside, although thankfully many biodiverse areas are prioritized under the United Nations Convention for Biological Diversity. An effort was made to fuse descriptive and informative monologues covering our Earth’s beauty with the communities, which are subject to the problems that our expansive population has collectively caused. Select members of remote communities came forward to represent their proud ownership of extreme cultural and biological diversity, offering solutions and risks for the future. It is suggested that using this same ‘united’ method we may benefit the cultural richness and both protection and sustainability of the diversity in these locations, in the face of continuing extractive approaches. Outreached-unit members are currently coming forward to form a new foundation with monitoring, educational, cultural and biodiversity protection benefits. Core values of the foundation are responsibility, sustenance and nurturing of the environment by upholding cultural diversity. Ownership is the key which will ensure our guardian-role into uncertain future horizons.
The end of a legacy: Debt and public purpose in English Higher Education

Alan Southern
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

Higher Education in England has undergone profound change in just over a decade. One of the most visible is the shift to a student fee-paying system of some £9,250 per student, per annum. Less visible however, is what McGettigan (2013) refers to as ‘bonds and other credit products’ as individual institutions seek to raise finance. This debt is often opaque, traded in private markets including in some cases bonds with covenants. Some bonds are traded on a secondary ‘public’ market requiring an institutional need for a credit rating.

University issued bonds were estimated to have grown from nothing to over $4bn between 2013 and 2018. With an estimated £6bn worth of investment in 2020, private equity companies have seized a significant proportion of student accommodation markets, while in some institutions bond-financed special purpose vehicles (SPVs) have been formed for this purpose. The essence of university debt, central to the financialisation of the sector, has gone hand in hand with other structural changes in HE that have been part of a substantial shift in moving financial, operational and political risk away from the institution and on to other stakeholders.

A further consequence is the effect on other interested groups. The development of a layer of senior management that have bureaucratised processes of working with and within institutions, has been notable. In particular, changes to the employment and learning environment has impacted both staff and students. Overall, whether the financialisation of HE is sustainable is an existential question for the sector although it is undoubtedly eradicating the public purpose legacy of higher education. The paper considers the issues set out above and seeks to conclude with ideas for reform that would heighten the social purpose of English universities.
The framing of local food in the Covid-19 pandemic: a policy review of mainstream and local food reports in the UK

Jasmine Black1,2,3, Damian Maye1, Anna Krzywoszynska4, Stephen Jones5

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted differences in the UK’s food system supply chains and their ability to cope with the crisis. Where long supply chains revealed weaknesses, short supply chains helped the vulnerable in recovering from the immediate emergency. Various reports were published during this time to highlight the relative strengths and weaknesses in supply chains and changes in consumer habits, including from the perspective of local food systems’ actors. In this paper, we review a selection of key documents published during the pandemic, from Spring 2020 until the end of 2021, that examine local food chains and the UK food system. Our analysis reveals a split between two groups: a ‘mainstream food system group’ and a ‘local food movement group’. There are significant differences between these two groups in the way local food is framed, understood, and imagined as a pathway for systemic food system recovery and resilience. The local food movement group maintains that re-localising food supply chains should be a central part of an improved UK food system, whereas the mainstream food system group focuses on how to support the current system, which it sees as largely resilient. On two points the two groups converge: dynamic Public Procurement and increasing the number of local abattoirs. Several examples of innovative local food networks and enterprises now exist across the country beyond the latter two. Such innovations need greater recognition and support from government to ensure better preparation for future crises and more equal recovery across the country.
Footprints of Global Actors in the Marginal Space: China’s National Oil Companies Embedded in the UK North Sea’s Oil and Gas Network

Yue Guo
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Abstract

The UK North Sea is a blue marginal space with great resource potential. Since the 1970s, it has gradually become an important part of the global oil and gas (O&G) production network, attracting many international oil companies to participate in O&G exploration and development. In the past three decades, China’s national oil companies (NOCs) have become key players in the global O&G industry, and their footprint expands to the North Sea. Through a series of cases by mergers and acquisitions (M&As), we expound the interactive process between UK’s O&G network and China’s NOCs. This paper holds that under the pressure of net zero climate target, ExxonMobil, Shell and other international oil companies (IOCs) have withdrawn from O&G assets in the North Sea and are shrinking their UK footprint, and the new China-oriented players entered (e.g. Sinopec and CNOOC), which has reconstructed the O&G network pattern and made multi-dimensional transformation. The success of China's NOCs business activities proves the further improvement of its globalisation strategy. In addition to the increase of O&G production, more importantly, the offshore production equipment, experience and management capacity will be comprehensively improved. As for the North Sea, a marginal space is linked with the global production networks due to resources, and intertwined with capital, market, knowledge and geopolitics.
The body as a living archive - a body (in) transit. evoking archives. leaving traces. playing with the unknown. navigating temporalities. present. pr(e)s(s)ence. afro-presente.

Luanda Carneiro Jacoel
Norwegian Theater Academy, Norway. ACTS - laboratory for performance practices, Norway. Casa Sueli Carneiro, Brazil

Abstract

Artistic Research

"I speak from a body that dances its multiple voices, layers and identities. A body entwining information networks, updating its memories. Surfing traces, always in a state of becoming”.

As a performance artist I work from the perspective of the body as a living archive that carries with it history, culture, ancestry, memories and temporalities. These archives are dynamic, moving along time in coexistence and permanence. Searching for a hybrid body, the work unfolds the aesthetic expressions of Afro-Brazilian rituals and folk dances; through somatic - practices and movement research, to discover the exciting possibilities that lie in the abstraction of codified dance forms. In dialogue between physicality, metaphors and symbols the body becomes a vehicle of communication, a place of events and images generated by the interaction between the performer and the viewer in real time.

Reflecting on the Black Atlantic history and the Afro-Diaspora that results from it. The research searches for a new path, a new journey inside of history, archives, legacy, and cosmologies. An Afro-Present body; an Afro-Diasporic body entangled in the transatlantic slave trade history. A being; belonging to traces. Dialoguing with collective memories and archives that were carried by the body and expressed in culture, symbols, philosophy and ways of living. Generating co-narratives; co-creations; call-responses in a spiral temporality.
The Interface of Air-Land Development in Cambodia: Actors, Power Relations and Cross Border Relay

Chao Yao
City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong (China)

Abstract

A new dimension of air has been added to China’s Belt and Road initiatives for a vertical expansion. The Air Silk Road, launched by the Civil Aviation Administration of China, is re-rendering itself through the International Civil Aviation Organization’s No Country Left Behind program, in its attempt of breaking into the ASEAN counties. Under this context, with the aim of promoting infrastructure construction of the nation, Cambodia government experimented this new mode of air-and-land development through projects of aviation highways, airports, and special zones by hand-joining Chinese corporates and authorities. This paper examines the air-land development in Cambodia, which is marked as “in need of intervention” in the aviation industry. In particular, we borrow the lens of capacity by Peters to investigate the interface through a series of relay of gates, and a power-laden norm construction process.

The Dara Sakor international airport is designed by Aviation Industry Corporation of China and constructed by the Union Group, which is the developer of Cambodia-China Investment Development Pilot Zone, serving as the interface of the air-land development. It has witnessed multiple discourse constructions pertaining to freedoms of air, capacity of airplanes, capacity of Airport Passenger Throughput, capability of China plan and China standard. The special zone development, however, encountered resistance from Cambodian environmental activists. The Koh Kong Island becomes another interface with its capacity of a mangrove ecosystem, putting the zone development to temporary stagnation.

Laura Mitchell
University of Brighton, UK

Abstract

This paper offers a critical, constructive engagement with emerging discourses of green social prescribing. It will first discuss how ‘nature’ as a therapeutic landscape in England has been constructed around fixed aesthetics of people and place. Specifically, legacies of racial knowledge that underpin the romantic concept of ‘nature’ are highlighted. It will be argued that providing a critical, historical context foregrounds the tension between the contemporary ‘minority-nature-separated’ narrative and the colonial narratives that position racialised people as close to nature. Further, it will explore this paradox and how it points to the social constructions of both ‘race’ and ‘nature’ over time, thus necessitating a reframing of ‘racial’ or ethnic inequalities in access to ‘nature’. This informs an interrogation of the idea of a ‘nature cure’ or ‘nature dose’, highlighting how such narratives can reinscribe hierarchical, fixed, categories of knowledge, as well as individualistic and apolitical health practices. The implications for a socially-just green social prescribing programme are then discussed. It is argued that research on green social prescribing should challenge fixed, flat or homogenised ideas of ‘nature’ and ‘green space’. Instead, green social prescribing should work with an understanding of the therapeutic landscape of ‘nature’ as constructed, dynamic and relational. This approach is essential for a framework and practice of green social prescribing that is genuinely inclusive and just.
`A spanner in the works´: Understanding the relationship between state withdrawal in rural areas, refugee integration policy and social polarization

Susanne Stenbacka, Tina Mathisen
Uppsala University, Sweden

Abstract

The Nordic welfare model is built on the logic of equality and equal access to welfare goods. In Sweden, the roll-back of the state from rural areas has however been significant and unequal access to essential welfare services such as schools, infrastructure and health care has led to polarizing tendencies between rural and urban areas. In this paper, we investigate the relationship between experienced access to public welfare services, refugee migration and social sustainability. While refugees are often placed and encouraged to settle in rural areas in order to prevent rural decline, these areas might not always be well equipped to fulfill the population’s needs in the first place. An in-flow of people might entail enhanced services with the help of state support - services that are withdrawn when new arrivals move on. The relationship between individual and state might be affected and result in decreased trust and decreased spatial cohesion. Our aim is to understand and explain how parallel processes of state intervention can result in tensions and dissatisfaction with how resources are distributed and how rural municipalities are viewed. The processes referred to is; the mission among rural communities to receive refugees and being responsible for their establishment, and the process of decreased access to physically located services offered by the public sector. The paper builds on empirical material from in-depth interviews with planners on national, regional and local level, as well as a broader group of key actors working with integration on a local level. In addition, we build on a media study of local newspapers in the Swedish region Dalarna. The paper provides increased knowledge of regional and rural cohesion, and adds to knowledge of the role of the local municipality in fulfilling international and national political and humanitarian goals.
Why skyscrapers after Covid-19?

Richard Smith
Swansea University, UK

Abstract

Globalization’s need for global cities with highly concentrated financial districts is discussed to explain how the Covid-19 pandemic will paradoxically only serve to make the world’s leading global cities more essential, valuable, and demanding of skyscrapers than ever before. Financial and corporate service firms cannot only be digitally based because they also require face-to-face interaction, collaboration, and joint-production within themselves, and between one another, in the most connected global cities to effectively function as competitive businesses. However, after Covid-19 advanced service firms will only not practice remote working where and when they must; so that in-place face-to-face interactions with colleagues and clients will be overwhelmingly only concentrated in the skyscraper-laden financial districts of the world’s leading global cities. The future of commercial and luxury residential skyscrapers in the world’s leading global cities can be said to be secure because the impact of Covid-19 on enhancing the centrality of these few highly connected and super-wealthy cities in globalization is both understandable and predictable; skyscrapers elsewhere in the Global North or South will struggle to remain viable as firms increasingly decentralise the work of their staff away from city centre offices.
Covid-19 and the management of Singapore’s public housing: a catalyst for change?

Jingheng Huang
Reading University, UK

Abstract

The built environment is shaped by and in turn shapes social relations. This can be observed most visibly in Singapore’s public housing. Growing ethnic enclaves being problematized back in 1989 led to the implementation of the Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP), which pegs the racial quota of every block of flats to the national proportion. The state has consistently maintained the EIP’s importance for social cohesion since its inception. Whilst the EIP has arguably disadvantaged racial minorities, generally racial and neighbourly relations have been harmonious over the years. However, Covid-19 has disrupted this state of affairs, with numerous racial incidents making the headlines in 2021 and exponential increases in neighbourly conflicts occurring during lockdown. Discussions about the EIP had been growing before Covid-19, with several scholars even calling for its abolishment, and consequently the developments brought by Covid-19 not only reinforce, but also broaden the scope of, extant arguments about the limitations of what the built environment can accomplish on its own in facilitating racial integration and social cohesion. Thus, this paper seeks to explore the impact and implications of Covid-19 on how public housing is administered and deployed to achieve state objectives. A discussion of the assumptions, disjunctures, taken-for-granted conditions, and future of how Singapore manages its built environment in light of the Covid-19 crisis to facilitate social cohesion will be presented at the conference.
Pandemic Landscapes. Fieldnotes from Heathrow Airport

Nicholas Ferguson
Richmond, The American University in London, UK

Abstract

This paper presents on the experience of London Heathrow under the conditions of the first national lockdown in England, March – June 2020. It brings together peripatetic experiences of the airport, cross readings between the anthropology of infrastructural space and Romantic treatments of the ruin. It relays how the airport, ordinarily a space of weakened phenomenological experience of the past, reverted to one in which history was acutely felt. For as the excesses of the present moment were withdrawn, the urban fabric nevertheless remained tailored to its demands. This created a sense of absence that invokes the discourse of the classical ruin, where what is revealed in the remnant is not cultural and technological advance, but hubris and an inevitable future. In this respect, the pandemic has altered the perspective of the airport’s expansion plans while simultaneously opening up a psychic space within which to act. Even as it returns to service, the airport remains irredeemably altered.
What the pandemic and its impact on the lives of older people can teach us about age-friendly urban spaces.

Linda Naughton, Miguel Padeiro, Cláudia Costa, Francisco Cunha
Coimbra University, Portugal

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified the importance of public space and provoked questions about how the crisis could change or even transform relationships to, and the design of, our living environments. As a health determinant, public space is a well-researched area and one of the eight central pillars of the World Health Organization (WHO) framework for age-friendly cities. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on the health and well-being of older people due to the increased risk of severity of the disease with both advancing age and associated co-morbidities. Restrictions on the movement of older people have also been more severe, with many countries imposing restrictions based on chronological age. In Portugal, confinement measures were targeted at older persons in terms of sheltering-at-home orders for the over 70’s. This paper looks at the impact of these restrictions and asks what we can learn from the pandemic, and those most affected by it, about the future of age-friendly urban spaces. The study compares four distinct urban areas in Portugal: Aveiro, Coimbra, Faro and Lisbon. We look at the lived experience of older people, in their own words, to understand how the design and availability of public space enhanced or diminished their well-being during the crisis. The paper offers possible policy measures to reduce the negative effects of the crisis in the short-term and looks at the future of age-friendly cities as a space for integrating public health measures and urban design.
Navigating Debt-trap Urbanism in Pandemic Times: Family Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation in Greater Manchester

Katherine Brickell
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Abstract

‘Trapped’ is a verb widely used to express the experiences of homeless people living in hotels, B&Bs, private hostels, short-stay Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO), or other emerging forms of provision such as modular developments, shipping containers, and converted office blocks. The economic fallout of COVID-19 has increased the number of individuals and particularly families in temporary accommodation. In England 253,000 people – the highest figure for 14 years – reside in what are typically insecure, cramped, and poor-quality accommodation (Shelter 2020). At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a rent-arrears crisis, particularly in towns and cities of Northern England, as households face threats to their incomes and private debt-taking (e.g. personal loans and credit cards) has exploded (Centre for Cities 2021). The paper focuses on Greater Manchester, one of the UK’s largest metropolitan areas and where more than a thousand children and their families are housed for an average stay of two years in ‘temporary’ accommodation (Shared Health Foundation 2019). The paper brings to the fore the experiences of indebted homeless families, of which the majority are single women raising children, during the pandemic. Based on a combination of action-oriented method(s) through which 15 participants chose to tell us their story, the research in Oldham with the Shared Health Foundation reveals first, the gendered and classed nature of ‘debt-trap urbanism’, and second, how women navigate and cope with their spatial expulsion from, and entrapment in, place through adverse incorporation into a financialised housing system as renters and debtors.
Politics of the 'maybe': Transmutations and (un)settlements at the surrounds of Cairo

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The American University in Cairo, Egypt

Abstract

At the core of expansive urbanization is the production of gated communities at a massive scale in many cities of the Global South. Based on ten years of research at the surrounds of Cairo, where I conduct a longitudinal study of transformations, I analyze three changes in the production of gated communities done by people at the surrounds: the souq inside the compound, the terrain void at the edge of the compound (where people use social housing projects around compounds as a base for job opportunities), and informality inside the compound (where relationships of inhabitation are constantly renewed inside/out). These practices disrupt the foundations of western epistemes of “gated communities” to unmask the vernacular logics of survivability by which people subvert these spaces and retool them in unprecedented manners. I draw on the work of scholars who go beyond the rubric of western scholars and expand on what it means to “stay with the trouble” and think of inhabitation as a process in an attempt to radicalize housing. It is in the least expected places under authoritarian structures that people’s practices unleash a politics of emancipation of what I theorize as the politics of the maybe. The condition of the maybe is shaped by a set of practices that interrupt the norms and transverse spaces at times when living, dying and becoming are all indefinite statuses only then that the possibilities of the maybe re-produce new urban imaginary at the expanding surrounds.
Risks and devastation caused through climatic catastrophe of nuclear outbreaks

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²Laboratory of Biotechnology and Valorization of Natural Resources, Ibn Zohr University, Monaco.
³Control and Systems Engineering Department, University of Technology-Iraq, Iraq

Abstract

The US National Academy of Sciences study on the medical consequences of nuclear war concludes that in the aftermath the greatest cause of fatalities would not be from physical-blast, radiation-burns nor ionizing radiation but from mass starvation. The subsequent food and health crisis is expected to cause one to four billion deaths. Preliminary data raises a giant red flag, threats to humanity are posed by the nuclear-arms race in southern Asia and larger, more dangerous nuclear arsenals held by other nuclear weapons states. Additional research must highlight the urgent need to rapidly negotiate a global agreement, outlawing and eliminating strategical nuclear deterrents. Simulation of crops global average calories decreased 7% in years 1-5 after a conflict of 5 Tg soot scenario and up to 50% under the 47 Tg scenario. In the 150 Tg soot case global average calories from crops would decrease by around 90% 3-4 years after the nuclear conflict. Changes would affect a catastrophe for global food markets, greatly exceeding the largest anomaly recorded by the FAO observational records from 1961. The reduced light, global cooling and likely trade restrictions after nuclear wars would have disastrous effects on food security. The negative impact of climate perturbations on total crop production can generally not be offset by livestock and aquatic food production, demonstrating international united motivations to both remove frightening devastation causes and upscale our bottom-up approaches of agroecological complementation. Increased intensity and frequency of climatic anomalies caused by nuclear explosions would deplete global grain reserves within a year.
Gauging the impact of temporary street space reallocations on residents

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¹Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium. ²Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 disrupted the lives of many people. The Belgian government responded to the pandemic by shutting down businesses and temporarily putting people on benefits as well as restricting travel abroad. Due to these measures, many inhabitants of Brussels stayed home during the summer of 2020. In a response to alleviate the changed situation of residents, the Brussels ministry of mobility launched the ‘Brussels on holidays’ programme through which it awarded funds to 45 projects from governmental and non-governmental organisations to give residents a holiday feeling in their own city. The funded projects varied from play streets to open air cinemas to bicycle reparation trainings. An important secondary aim of the programme was to promote the new regional mobility plan ‘Good Move’, which aims to reduce motorised traffic and increase active modes of transport. The programme aimed to give residents a ‘sneak preview’ of a calmer, more liveable Brussels. The programme was evaluated through interviews with 12 project organisers six months after the programme had ended. While the organisers mostly experienced support for their projects, many were not aware of the link between the programme and the mobility plan. Furthermore, the organisers did not perceive a mentality change among participants regarding the allocation of public space: entertaining participants was prioritised over questioning the current unequal distribution of public space. The projects were also found to confirm existing inequalities in the use of public space: (young) women and elderly were a minority among participants.
Waiting for take-off: Informal settlers and housing struggles on airport land

Sneha Sharma
University of Bonn, Germany

Abstract

Housing struggles for informal communities revolve not only around securing tenure or resettlement but hinges on the art of maneuvering the 'temporality of displacement'. Confronted with threats of eviction, slum dwellers around the Mumbai airport have been awaiting rehabilitation since the last two decades. With the uncertainties of urban living having intensified over time, inhabitants now endure increased risks of flooding, demolitions, evictions along with precarities in employment and access to basic services. The pandemic has further caused disruptions in their housing struggles by hindering administrative processes of rehabilitation as well as community mobilisation. These uncertainties are shaping the ways in which communities build resilience and secure themselves through close-knit networks to 'stay put' (Weinstein, 2014). In this paper, I draw on empirical work to illustrate how inhabitants live with differentiated risks, uncertainties and also interact with the contentious timelines (of displacement) imposed by the state and other actors. Temporality emerges as a crucial aspect in housing struggles. In their efforts to inhabit the city they engage in a range of political acts through which they are able to generate delays in state surveys, postpone demolitions or prolong eviction events. I show how these actions speak to the larger politics of housing but also feed into the ongoing time-sensitive (airport) infrastructural developments in the city.
n/a

Chris Philo
Glasgow University, UK

Abstract

n/a
Governing towards Low Carbon Mobility: Exploring opportunities and challenges in different governance networks

Louise Reardon¹, Timea Nochta¹, Li Wan²
¹University of Birmingham, UK. ²University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract

A low carbon mobility system is essential if the UK wants to meet its target of net-zero emissions by 2050. This paper draws on CREDS funded research, to identify the ways in which multi-level governance networks in the UK understand the challenge of low carbon mobility, and the barriers and opportunities for change towards achieving this goal. The research takes a decentred approach which ‘...necessitates understanding the diverse sets of narratives, meanings and actions that comprise governing practices’ (Bevir, McKee and Matthews 2017, 9). Here then ‘...analysis turns to the ways in which the traditions and beliefs of actors cause them to construct situations in differing ways and to determine different pathways to action (Finlayson 2007). A decentred approach emphasises a focus on human agency, subjective understanding and local narratives as the starting point for understanding, whereas a focus on formal governance arrangements starts from the constituted roles and responsibilities of organisations and how they then influence actor behaviour. Such an approach helps us to get behind the formal rules, responsibilities, and capacities of governance actors, to understand how they operationalise and understand these in practice in the messy reality of day-to-day governing, and in turn helps us identify the different governance challenges of achieving net-zero in different places.

The paper draws on over 40 interviews and four participatory workshops in the case study areas to compare two city regions, Birmingham and Cambridge. In particular the research highlights the limitations of local government action on net-zero due to capacity constraints and top-down hierarchical approaches to intervention from within the public sector. This raises important questions about how local authorities can more effectively harness the capacity they do have and adapt their approaches to better engage with stakeholders to foster and leverage change indirectly as well as directly.
The Rise of Work Remote and New Spaces of Inequality

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Minor Outlying Islands. ²School of Kinesiology & Health Studies, Queen's University at Kingston, Canada

Abstract

The proliferation of remote work with the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a new geography of work and new spaces of inequality, particularly in urban areas. While the ability to work remotely can be perceived as an advantage, the experience of remote work has varied substantially. For example, those who balanced work-from-home with childcare and education required greater levels of life adjustments and experienced greater social isolation. Additionally, while some may have found flexibility and autonomy in where and when they work, others experienced technology-related stress from being "always-on" and from increased employer monitoring (Wheatley, 2021). The upshot is that remote work has both preserved and subverted the spatial dynamics of work-space and life-space (Atkinson, 2020). Yet, apart from news reports, little is known as to how the circumstances of remote work have impacted the structure and geography of labor market inequalities. We build on Henri Lefebvre's "Spatial Triad," and recent applications of his work in organizational science and urban studies, to conceptualize the varieties of experience with the transition to remote work and the inequalities embodied in those experiences. We conducted a survey of 1200 remote workers in the US during the COVID-19 pandemic, examining how remote work has (re)shaped their working lives and lived experiences. We argue that technology-enabled remote work situations blur the spatial and temporal lines of work, thereby producing new spaces of inequality while reinforcing existing labor market vulnerabilities. Extending Lefebvre’s Spatial Triad empirically, we analyze survey data to measure remote worker views on their autonomy or control (conceived space), techno-stress (perceived space), and life disruption (lived space). The results identify old and new spaces of inequality as manifested in a wide divergence in remote worker experiences and outcomes across a range of demographic, economic, and geographic characteristics.
Anna Secor
Durham University, UK

Abstract

n/a
Home sweet home? Experiences of independent homeworking and their implications for wellbeing

Will Barnes
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Abstract

This paper will contribute to the session on the lived geographies of nomadic workers and new emerging worksapes by presenting findings from research investigating the impact of home-based, self-employed creative work on wellbeing. The research responds to calls for studies interested in the subjective wellbeing of workers “to pay attention to the continued trend towards individualised work in people’s own homes” (Reuschke, 2019, p. 1345) – a trend that has since been accelerated by the global pandemic – as well as concerns that have been raised regarding the experiences of creative freelancers in particular (Mould, 2018). The analysis discussed draws on data collected from 21 home-based, self-employed creative workers from across England who were asked to keep video diaries over a two-week period, participate in an hour and a half long interview, and complete a subjective wellbeing assessment. The findings that the paper will discuss will cover two themes. Firstly, it will present the unique emotional experiences of home observed amongst these independent homeworkers born from the tensions between the comforts and habits of homeworking and the need for environmental variation and change. Secondly, it will focus on the social dimensions of their everyday lives, discussing the impact that the spatialities and practices of their work have on their social relationships in and beyond their home, as well as their opportunities to contribute to the wellbeing and happiness of others.
Abstract

n/a
A response to the readers' comments

Peter Merriman
Aberystwyth University, UK

Abstract

n/a
Working at home, for free: reckoning with freelancers’ domestic reproductive labour and professional ‘hope labour’

Nancy Worth, E. Alkim Karaagac
University of Waterloo, Canada

Abstract

This paper is inspired by the diverse economies work of Gibson-Graham, specifically their iceberg model of labour which highlights what counts as work—wage labour for a capitalist firm and what doesn’t—alternative economic activities that are hidden below the iceberg’s waterline. This paper develops an iceberg model for work-from-home media freelancers, with their paid work above the waterline and specific forms of unpaid work hidden below. First, I examine reproductive labour, emphasizing the spatiality of home as paid and unpaid workspace. I also examine who does this work, which is gendered but also related to employment relation—the freelancer is often positioned as the more flexible worker who can (and should) take on domestic tasks. Second, I consider professional ‘hope labour’, “unpaid or under-compensated labour undertaken in the present, usually for exposure or experience, with the hope that future work may follow” (Mackenzie and McKinlay 2021). Here, rather than spatial the lens is temporal, oriented to the future rather than domestic labour’s ongoing present. Freelancing, especially in the media, is rife with requests for speculative work, or for a dollar rate per word that hasn’t change in decades. Within hope labour the expectations of who does this work is connected to the entrepreneurial subjectivity of freelancing. Across these two distinct forms of often hidden labour my aim is reckon with the role of unpaid labour in freelancers working lives, attending to the consequences of both workplace and sector.
596

n/a

Matt Hannah
University of Bayreuth, Germany

Abstract

n/a
597

n/a

Juliet Fall
Université de Genève, Switzerland

Abstract

n/a
How repeated unpredictability shapes inequality: Exploring the time-space of nomadic workers in Seoul

Yoonai Han
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Abstract
Nomadic and entrepreneurial way of living and working are increasingly touted as a lifestyle choice in post-industrial society, despite the broader social conditions that impede many people from settling down and making future plans. This research aims to examine how uncertainty and unpredictability that historically enabled upward socio-spatial mobility are transforming into a force that unevenly shapes the boundary of everyday life and future of people in Seoul, South Korea. I draw upon a thirteen-month ethnography on freelancers in coworking spaces, short-term workers without workspaces including delivery workers, supplemented by life history interviews. Research questions addressed are: How are the unpredictable work conditions navigated and lived through by the nomadic workers? How do the unpredictable nature of freelance works and short-termism (Xiang, 2021) as a mode of living enable/restrict organisation of resources, use of time-space, and imagination of future in cities? In this session, I seek to discuss how the increasing nomadic life, formation of daily habits and subjectivity studied in this research echo with broader geographic contexts and its implications.
Examining the lived geographies and new emerging workscapes of travel bloggers as examples of nomadic workers

Nina Willment
University of York, UK

Abstract

Drawing on extensive thesis research conducted just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this paper examines the working lives, workspaces and career building strategies of British travel bloggers as examples of freelance, digital workers - whose work has become symbolic of the ‘nomadic worker’ imaginary. This paper will unpack the spatial and social self-organisation of the workplaces and career building strategies of travel bloggers - through discussions of the aesthetic, affective and entrepreneurial practices of labour being undertaken across travel bloggers' everyday working lives. In presenting the everyday working lives of travel bloggers in this way, the thesis uncovers how ideas of ‘nomadism’ become complicated through the spatialities and mobilities of a freelancer who must travel as work. The paper will also discuss how travel bloggers as workers cope with the turbulence and uncertainty of ‘nomadic’ work as a lifestyle choice - using the lens of entrepreneurial labour to examine travel bloggers’ diverse survival strategies evident within a constantly evolving digital economy.
Finding a Way Through Covid: How Creative Walking Provided Connection, Comfort, Diversion and New Ways of Moving During Lockdown

Dee Heddon\textsuperscript{1}, Morag Rose\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}University of Glasgow, UK. \textsuperscript{2}University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract


Our findings demonstrate that:

- Lockdown restrictions were the catalyst for some people to explore their local environment in new and creative ways which they felt were very positive.
- Simple interventions such as pebble trails or window posters helped create a sense of community and mitigated against isolation.
- Many people found walking a useful tool for their mental health and wellbeing and this effect was enhanced through using creative methods alongside walking – but walking should not be seen as a substitute for healthcare or support.
- Daily walking helped establish a beneficial routine when working from home and / or feeling overwhelmed by the impact of COVID-19.
- Nature, green space and encounters with wildlife such as listening to birdsong provided solace and inspiration. Local parks played a vital role in communities.
- Photography, and sharing walks online, helped individuals make sense of what was happening and strengthened connections with people they could not be with physically.
- These barriers were magnified during the pandemic but were often experienced differently depending on personal experiences. For example, many people chose to avoid busy locations and reported concerns around social distancing and sharing space. However for others quieter streets often felt more intimidating and unsafe. For both groups the perceived threat limited their movement.

Our research foregrounds just how important walking was to many people during the pandemic. What we also reveal here are the additional benefits that creative walking can have for individuals, families and communities, further enhancing health and wellbeing through stimulating the imagination, motivating behaviour, and enacting ways to connect safely across physical distances. Our research demonstrates that creative walking can be a powerful tool for good, helping to encouraging more people to walk.
Corporate Governance Under Financial Control: Shareholder Primacy and (Im)patient Capital of Asset Managers

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Abstract

The recent decade has been characterized by the rapid proliferation of US asset management firms who currently manage tens of trillions of dollars in investments globally. This study examines one particular consequence of asset manager capitalism—the prioritization of the interests of shareholders above all other stakeholder groups. While many of these passively-managed investment funds proclaim to be long-term investors and providers of “patient capital,” their rise in the United States has coincided with increased dividend payouts and stock buybacks. Given a lack of firm-level studies exploring the relationship between ownership by asset management firms and shareholder payouts, this paper examines whether higher rates of ownership by US-based asset managers leads firms to prioritize the short-term interests of shareholders. We analyze the shareholder composition of 39,029 globally listed firms in 2018 (provided by the Orbis database) and the investment holdings of US institutional investors (including US mutual funds) in US publicly-traded firms between 1997 and 2020 (provided by the Thomson Reuters/Refinitiv database). Under various model configurations, we find a positive and statistically significant relationship between ownership by US-based asset managers and distributed payouts (particularly in the form of stock buybacks). While there are country-level and industry-level differences among the firms investigated, the effect of US asset management ownership remains strong across the majority of examined cases. The study makes a timely contribution to the literatures on shareholder primacy and asset manager capitalism by systematically outlining the impacts of US asset managers on shareholder payouts across countries and economic sectors.
From rhetorical accelerations to transport decarbonisation actions. What role for local authorities?

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Abstract

In the past three years, the vast majority of local and regional government authorities in Britain have declared a climate emergency, alongside the setting of net zero emissions targets, from as early as 2028. This rhetorical ambition can be contrasted with thirty years of almost zero emission reductions for the transport sector and an unclear implementation pathway. This research explores the extent to which local authorities are able to maintain faith to their ambitions and foster transitions towards low-carbon mobility, between the demands for radical action by social movements and citizens assemblies, and within a context of under-resourced and under-powered local government where, however, many of the conflicts over space allocation, pricing and demand management play out.

The paper focuses on the different governance strategy that local authorities are taking to enable actions in a context of centralisation of funding and strategic thinking, and ‘devolution’ of ambition and responsibility. We analyse how, thanks to pre-existing policy networks, reaching beyond the traditional boundaries of the public sector, local actors mobilise innovative organisational arrangements and mechanisms, as well as revenue-generating actions to attempt decarbonising transport at the local level. At the same time, we reflect on the extent to which the decarbonisation agenda is catalysing a re-making of transport planning and governance at different scalar levels and question what implications such changes will have in terms of broader social justice and transport justice goals.

The research takes a case study approach, exploring three case study sites, Oxford, Leeds and Nottingham, where processes of transport decarbonisation policy formation and deployment are examined to understand what political, institutional and economic forces act to expedite transport decarbonisation. The analysis is based on interviews with representatives from governments, social movements, and private and third sector bodies who have been involved in transport decarbonisation governance processes.
Music production as nomadic work: shifts in geographical attributes and functions of studios

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Abstract

Nomadic workers are prominent in various occupations in the knowledge and information based industry, and in particular, workers in the cultural and creative industries. Those workers tend to use third space of 'neither office nor home' (Ross, 2015); such as co-working spaces as workplaces, for reasons such as creating interaction between people in the same and different industries and their reputation (Merkel, 2015). On the other hand, music production requires solid sound environments, and many artists who make their living from music work in a place, which they call 'studios' (rented apartments), in order to concentrate on production. The music industry that deals with intangible digital content, has been transformed its workscapes under the direct influence of the shift towards digital economy from a relatively early stage, and it is not limited to hybrid performance spaces such as on YouTube (Ikeda and Morgner, 2021), but also in the production process itself, with COVID-19 as an opportunity. Therefore, based on interviews with several music producers based in Tokyo (such as beat track makers, DJs, rappers, etc.), this paper will report an exploratory results on the geographical attributes and functions of studios, which are practically difficult to track with statistics.
The right to work and its territoriality

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Abstract

In this paper I demonstrate the present relevance of the foundational geographical literature on territoriality to the phenomenon of workplace flexibility. My article published in the Geographical Journal in 2021 serves as the point of departure. By synthesising two different theorisations of human territoriality by Claude Raffestin and Robert D. Sack, I had suggested that spatial strategies of controlling and affecting a territory require human beings to mediate the deployment of resources so as to reshape their territorial relations with others. The current paper continues this theoretical development in relation to the legal geography of work. I aim at offering a response to Sack’s question in his discussion on the territoriality of workplace. He asked in the 1980s, ‘is territorial organisation of some kind or other essential to any complex and technologically advanced society?’ As Nicholas Blomley discusses in his 1994 seminal work, which uses labour struggles centring on economic spaces to develop the geographies of law, the right to work (for whatever purposes including essential humanity, human dignity, and livelihood) encompasses individuals’ rights to, and freedom of, mobility and place. In view of the increasingly precarious workscape amidst the networked cities, reconsidering the relationship between territorial organisation and the right to work frames an important quest. I use data collected from my fieldwork in Hong Kong to reflect upon this question of territoriality, examining the ways how workers mediated resources to find their workplaces and shaped their territorial relations with others in dealing with the pandemic restrictions.
The return of the modernization narrative and a seemingly inevitable future for the Atewa Forest Reserve? - Uncovering future-making practices, discursive power, and counter-reactions.

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Abstract

The Ghanaian government aims to develop an integrated bauxite–aluminium industry and seeks to further bauxite extraction at several sites across the country. This vision is embedded within the political agenda Ghana Beyond Aid, introduced by the country's president, Nana Akufo-Addo, in 2018. One possible mining area is the Atewa Forest Reserve, one of the few remaining intact upland evergreen rainforests in Ghana. While the president talks about industrialization bringing prosperity for all, there are more and more environmental NGOs opposing these plans. Mining conflicts in Political Ecology Studies have mostly a focus on the territorial and spatial dynamics concerning struggles over land. However, a growing number of studies in Political Ecology and also human geography in general, address temporality and nostalgia or future imaginaries around resources (e.g., Pijpers and Eriksen 2019, Edensor et al 2020, Fent and Kojola 2020, Ho 2021). Especially when no mining has taken place so far, the conflict is more about the possible future developments of the territory. With his dominant narrative of modernization and industrialization through the Ghana Beyond Aid agenda, the President of Ghana has created a single development path that only needs to be managed. At this point, reaching a certain future is becoming a question of managing the present; furthermore, the created future legitimizes present practices. In this presentation, I will draw attention to these future-making practices, but also on the growing resistance and counter-strategies from environmentalists. It appears to be important to deconstruct discursive power so that the future appears not to be something without alternatives. My findings are based on my work and field visits from the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. I conducted interviews in the field and analyzed documents. I used a political ecology perspective, because it has a long tradition in analyzing politicization or de-politicization of nature, and recently shifts to focus also more on time and future as a category to analyze with maybe fruitful insights for a discussion in this session.
Ethnographic Research and the Complexities of Personal Engagement with the Far Right: A Critical Meta-Synthesis and Research Agenda

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Abstract

This paper critically engages with the ethnographic works of Busher, Ashe, Blee, Fangen, Sehgal, etc. through a meta-synthesis of forty-two ethnographic articles focusing on contemporary far right political movements. The results of the meta-synthesis are twofold: (1) key themes regarding the researchers’ personal experiences engaging with the far right, and (2) how the usage of an explicitly ethnographic approach generated unique insights into the everyday aspects of far right life, organization, mobilization, etc. Additionally, the ethics of conducting such research are explored and questions of platforming, passive endorsement, and anti-fascist research positionalities are examined. Specifically, Joel Busher’s adoption of what he terms a “non-dehumanization principle”, Stephen Ashe’s work with the British National Party and anti-fascist counter-protestors, and the openness championed by Kathleen Blee and Katrine Fangen as a necessary prerequisite for access to the far right are discussed. Building upon the results of the meta-synthesis, the second portion of the paper will utilize a feminist ethnographic and geographic approach to highlight some initial findings concerning the infrastructures of the far right and everyday fascisms within a Finnish context. Attention will be paid to how the far right is represented (as well as how it works to establish itself) within traditionally “apolitical” spaces (such as workplaces, gyms, music venues, via social media, etc.), as well as how it is currently working to reorient itself in the face of a stall in the popularity of far right populism in Europe more generally.
Abstract

Media, as an institution, has evolved over time, to become a multi-dimensional apparatus of influential representation. Over the years, modern media has come to assume various participatory and mitigating roles in small as well as large-scale environmental issues and socio-political-economic events. Traditional mass media has played a significant role in influencing how decisions are made and acted upon by a larger audience, public institutions, funding bodies, policy-makers and researchers. This research focuses on the role of the mainstream media in affecting disaster recovery outcomes for affected people and places. The representations in this context of disasters include the portrayal of the event, the people and the communities affected by it, the recovery process, and the overall shaping of people’s perceptions about it. We take the case of Odisha, a coastal state in India, which has been exposed to many climatic hazards in the past, and has, over the years, evolved its disaster risk management approaches. This study analyses local, state-level, national, and international media coverage in print, online and television media (in English and Odiya) to highlight the tropes used in the media to represent the event, affected-people, the actions taken, in the context of the reasons and agendas of various actors involved. By doing so, we reflect on the potential long-term outcomes of such representations on the recovery outcomes for the people and places.
From the balcony to Caminito: an ongoing rhuthmanalysis

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Abstract

The work of Henri Lefebvre Rhythmanalysis, Space, Time and Everyday Life (2004) is generally known as the original proposer of rhythmmanalysis, inspired by the last chapter of Gaston Bachelard’s book La dialectique de la durée (1963), entitled “Rhythmanalysis”. Nevertheless, it was the Portuguese philosopher Lúcio Pinheiro dos Santos who developed the notion of rhythmmanalysis. In this chapter I address this episode of the genealogy of rhythmmanalysis aiming to contribute to a broader understanding of its context of origin. I also present fragments of a rhythmmanalysis exercise developed in Caminito, Buenos Aires, as part of my research in the field of art studies. Following a pre-Platonic notion of rhythm (Benveniste 1966), I draw on those fragments as much as on the reflexive confrontation of rhythmmanalysis with feminist and ch’ixi epistemologies (e.g., Rivera 2018; Haraway 1988) in order to propose what I come to call rhuthmanalysis.
Eurythmia and Arrhythmia: Understanding gendered performances through rhythm in the City of London

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Abstract

This chapter is concerned with the relationship between gender performativity and rhythm, taking the City of London (often known by its metonym the Square Mile) as the focus for the empirical research, and extending a Lefebvrian understanding of urban space and time via the practice of rhythmanalysis. It is concerned with how the City of London is imagined, constructed and experienced in and through gender performativity which can be expressed rhythmically (Reid-Musson, 2018). The research is based on fieldwork including photographic and interview data, as well as an embodied, immersive methodology used to analyse rhythms, showing how this can help to both sense and make sense of organizational place, particularly in terms of how such places can compel feelings of belonging or non-belonging. The chapter looks beyond the spatial configuration of a single organization to encompass the wider geographical location of multiple organizations, in this case the City.

The findings show that the relationship between the socio-cultural and material aspects of the City can be understood through the rhythms of place. Using a methodological approach based on Lefebvre’s Rhythmanalysis (2004), the chapter foregrounds a subjective, embodied and experiential way of researching the places and spaces of organizing, and shows how gendered inclusion and exclusion can be expressed spatially and rhythmically.
Rhythm as energy in space and time: engaging rhythmanalysis with climate change and urban mobility transitions

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Abstract

In rhythmanalysis energy is positioned centre stage in defining what rhythm is and how it manifests: ‘everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy there is rhythm’ (Lefebvre [1992] 2004, 15). However, there is no further explication and little engagement in subsequent scholarship. I discuss this absence and propose a thermodynamic, materialist understanding of the energy in rhythm, linking to Lefebvre’s interest in physics-thinking, and to his and Régulier’s commitment to a multi-disciplinary rhythmanalytic project. I consider the polyrhythmic interweaving of energy flows in everyday life and the relationship between the techno-energy of energy systems, and the ‘natural’ energetic exchanges of planetary movements, ecological processes and organism functioning, including human bodies. I outline how an energetically oriented, multi-disciplinary rhythmanalysis can be applied to the climate crisis, to its arrhythmic consequences as well as to its making and mitigation in the rhythms of society and economy. I then focus on the rhythm-energies of urban life and the challenges of transitioning urban mobility away from the domination of hydrocarbon powered automobility systems. The polyrhythmic structure of urban automobility is characterised, encompassing rhythms of fuel supply, fuelling, vehicle movement and pollution generation. The rhythm-energetic shifts involved in moving to shared public transport, electric rather than hydrocarbon powered vehicles and to the corporeal, calorie-fuelled rhythms of walking and cycling are laid out, considering what they change, what they retain and what they add to the polyrhythmia of urban mobility.
Resisting ‘safety’: houselessness, pandemic governance and possibilities of dwelling

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Abstract

The imposition of lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19 in India was violent (Bhan et al., 2020). By relegating safety within a designated, interior and physical space, commonly referred to as the ‘home’ (Brickell, 2020), the governance of the pandemic invoked colonial tropes of planning and administration to segregate and shield the hypervisible urban poor from the housed urban ‘gentry’. Thus, the idea of safety that was circulated during the pandemic not only reinforced hegemonic ideas of ‘home’ but exacerbated urban dispossession. Drawing insights from an activist-academic research collaboration across 3 Indian cities that interrogated how the urban houseless experienced COVID-19 management, the paper unsettles hegemonic notions of inhabitation and urban belonging. Using interviews, field notes, and feminist reflexivity, the paper traces containment and shelterisation as the dominant spatial strategies of pandemic governance that disrupted the everyday means of survival of marginal urban dwellers. The paper will argue that dominant notions of safety deliberately frame urban marginalised bodies as threats to the city that is attempted to be managed through prescriptive forms of housing. Simultaneously, the paper draws attention to the responses of marginal urban dwellers who sought to challenge hegemonic iterations of safety, operationalised through market-based ideas of housing, through defiance and care. Contrary to Western notions of housing and home, the paper uses dwelling as a powerful trope to frame improvisational forms of urban inhabitation that enable marginal dwellers to resist and navigate emerging forms of domination and dispossession (Young, 2005; Anjaria and McFarlane, 2011; Yiftachel, 2012).

References:

Persephonic Rhythms and the Seasonal Urbanization of Island Space: Tourism and Migration in Lesvos, Greece

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Abstract

The purpose of this chapter is to showcase rhythm analysis as methodology for the field of island studies. Islands maintain urban qualities that occur seasonally or intermittently with the mass arrival of tourists. On the Greek island of Lesvos, the focus of this chapter, the expansion of the tourist population brings with it the increase of events and activities such as concerts, art shows, sports, and the multiplication of social venues including bars, cafes, and restaurants that are typical of cities. Lesvos has become well-known as ground zero to the EU refugee crisis. This chapter also considers how the influx of migrants contributes to the rhythm of intermittent urbanization on the island. To ground my analysis, I relate these forms visitations to the myth of Persephone. The application of rhythm analysis for articulating the social conditions of Lesvos, and potentially islands, includes bringing together historical, geo-political, and ideological cadences. In the case of Lesvos, Greece’s historic peripheralization socially and economically in Europe shapes Northern European tourism and the EU’s lack of accountability towards the immigration crisis on its Eastern borders. The application of rhythm analysis holds potential not only for island studies, but for evaluating regional geo-politics and for considering how some spaces oscillate between urbanness and rurality.
Counterpoint dancing: towards a rhytmanalysis of interculturalism

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Abstract

This chapter extends Henri Lefebvre’s writings on rhythm to explore how time, space, power and difference articulate themselves in the uneven social relations of intercultural space. Taking Lefebvre’s ‘Seen From the Window’ chapter as a theme, I propose a variation of rhythmanalysis which interrogates the politics of copresence at a dance party in Munich, Germany. Plug in Beats is a participatory party – songs are selected by the crowd through a karaoke-like process. The monthly event was initiated in 2015 when a refugee camp was installed near an arts and cultural center. The party creates a space for dialogue between new migrants and established locals occupying a wide range of social positions. I look at the implications of rhythm for studying intercultural dance through a rhythmanalysis of one party in June 2018. The methodological approach is framed around the embodied multi-sensory participant observation advocated by Lefebvre, however the analysis draws on additional ethnographic data from interviews, audio recordings, Shazam (a song identification app), and video footage. I propose a relational rhythmanalysis which engages the historical and geographic power dynamics at work in music, dancing, and in the party space. Such an approach, I argue, reveals how participants negotiate and sometimes reconfigure social relations of difference through rhythm itself. While there are limits to the questions that rhythmanalysis allows the researcher to ask and answer, it is a valuable means to engage how power and difference work – and might be more equitably reworked – in migrant-receiving and otherwise heterogeneous spaces.
A tale of two temples: Heritage and religious spaces in postcolonial Delhi

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Abstract

Indian Independence and Partition in 1947 demographically transformed Delhi, the capital city, through communal violence, Hindu and Sikh refugee arrivals, and Muslim departures to Pakistan. This paper juxtaposes the postcolonial trajectories of a Hindu temple and Muslim tomb in the Jangpura-Bhogal locality of Delhi around questions of refugee-citizen rehabilitation, minority rights, and heritage.

While inheriting Delhi’s ‘monuments’ and ‘ruins’, a postcolonial state and its citizenry encounter and negotiate with popular memories around these sites. In the first case, refugee revival of a dormant medieval Hindu temple in 1952 is interrupted through its demolition on grounds of illegality and interference with refugee housing construction. The vocal discontent of residents, negative media coverage, petitions evoking popular memories, and documentary proof of the site’s antiquity yield results as the temple is allotted another site. In the second instance, Hindu refugees re-use an abandoned Muslim tomb to establish a temple in the 1960s. A decade later, legal claims of its past as a tomb are denied, and its material remnants demolished to expand the temple complex by the late 1980s, thereby erasing its histories and meanings for a now absent Muslim population.

A series of everyday, individual, and institutional actions ‘revive’ and ‘replace’ medieval ruins to produce sites of community. We see the recovery of past histories and practices and the accretive erasures of memories, histories, space. Thus state-citizen relations, differences between present and absent populations, and ‘official’ heritage condition urban settlement, its attendant material transformations, and erasures.
A Solution for Who?: How Overcrowded Accommodation Has Emerged in Dublin, Ireland

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Abstract

The United Nations has recognized the emergence of a global housing crisis driven by processes of housing financialization particularly in the private rental sector (Human Rights Council, 2017), which has hindered access to adequate housing and increased housing precarity among urban residents (Hearne, 2020; Maalsen, 2019). Emerging literature has used the lens of informality to interrogate how worsening housing crises have produced solutions that exploit precarity to inculcate new informalizing tendencies in the Global North (Gurran et al 2019). Dublin is a particularly acute example of this with its multitude of housing crises—affordability, homelessness, stock—stacked on top of each other. Despite high-profile government strategies like co-living and the build-to-rent sector, trenchant policy debate, and activist responses, residents have struggled to access and markets have failed to supply housing, while the state has been unable to govern a system of adequate and affordable provision. Within the context of this failure, a range of new housing types and tenures have begun to emerge that claim to provide ‘solutions’ to the housing crisis. Recognizing how informality is always strategically and selectively deployed by the state (Roy, 2005), this presentation draws on the lens of informality to examine how overcrowded accommodation has emerged in Dublin and how it is disrupting—and disruptive of—the housing system and regulation within the city. Through policy analysis and interviews, I offer a critical analysis of how overcrowded accommodation is persisting through regulatory tolerance and the unmet needs of the city’s residents.
Problematising Disruption through the Smart Home

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Abstract

In this paper, I argue for a critical distance to the term “disruption” in geographical research. To exemplify my stance, I use the smart home as a lens to problematise the use of “disruption”. Firstly, the term disruption stems from a specific context (Christensen 1997). Disruption superseded “progress”, but keeps up the same – questionable – impetus of modernisation and novelty that accompanies technology (Lepore 2014). Secondly, this supposed newness of “disruptive” technologies clouds a recognition of continuities. Feminist scholars have pointed out how small the impact of household technologies has been on the gendered visions of home and housewife (Schwartz Cowan 1983; Wajcman 1991). Building on their findings, I analyse advertisements for smart homes in which existing middle- and upper-class representations of the home as a haven, a space of care, as private and controllable, persist. Thirdly, rather than framing the smart home and its technologies as disrupting our living space, a broader perspective is needed that considers both the space of the home and the structural conditions it is embedded in. The smart home can invisibilise structural challenges by perpetuating visions of the idealized home. An example of this is the “smart wife” (Strengers and Kennedy 2020) that the smart home is promising: the smart wife being the ideal housewife, and the technological fix to the care crisis. Overall, these points complicate the narrative of change through digital technologies that the term “disruption” is implying and thus substantiate my call for a critical examination.
Unsettling the ontology of Israeli/Palestinian heritage and its documentation: the case of Jerusalem Archives project

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Abstract

Urban Israeli research typically presents a progressive narrative, representing both the Zionist discourse of modernization and Jewish rebirth in an ancient homeland. Reflecting this, the exploration of the history of Israeli cities generally relies on selective documentation, recovering a very specific type of urban heritage and losing centuries of none-Jewish history in the process.

Lately, bottom-up retrieval of documentation aids in recovering the Palestinian history of Israeli cities, exposing every-day life rather than institutional history. One such project is Jerusalem Archives – an urban heritage digitization project, which seeks to provide access to wide-ranging records that document Jerusalem’s modern planning and architecture histories in national, municipal, and private collections. It exposes records which are locked behind paywalls, complex ethno-national and municipal bureaucracies, or simply unclassified, fragile and inaccessible.

Transforming these documents into digital data should be understood as processes of heritage-in-the-making that can open opportunities for active participation in, and contestation over the very meaning and purpose of heritage – heritage for whom, by whom? Who benefits? Who’s rendered invisible or lost? Our work explores possible design logics of a transitional data infrastructure that would incorporate contested and contradicting epistemologies of urban heritage (Poirier et al); examine, how the co-production of metadata can play a role in engaging the complexity and historicity of data (Bowker), and finally assess whether digitization processes can open up the fora and spaces for co-production of socially-contextualized information that advances truth and accountability without the need for consensus.
Tenant Activism at the Intersections of Rentier and Platform Capitalism

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Abstract

In this paper we discuss an ongoing project that sits at the intersection of two major changes in Australian housing: the intersection of so-called ‘generation rent’ and ‘platform real estate’. With the growth of the private rental market including the corporate dominated build-to-rent sector, a considerable number of new digital technologies are aimed at renters, landlords and property managers. We are interested in these technologies that have been specifically developed for the private rental sector to understand how they are mediating relationships between landlords, property managers and tenants, either perpetuating or reshaping existing power relations, producing new rental products, and creating new sites of value. While digital technologies have the potential to exacerbate housing inequalities, for example through increased surveillance and automated eviction which we see increasingly used by corporate landlords, they also have the potential to create a better housing system and future and can be an effective tool for organising and advocacy.

Our project involves academics and three leading tenant advocacy organisations in Australia working together to assess the nature and consequences of digital innovation, identify possible advocacy and policy responses, and ultimately using this data to build a new digital platform that might help these organisations and other advocates to work towards better housing outcomes for private renters. In this presentation we will focus on the conceptual innovations that are emerging from this work which sit at the intersection of rentier capitalism and platform capitalism.
Ethical Bricolage in Digital Planning Consultations

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Abstract

Digital technologies are increasingly popular among developers for statutory community consultations ahead of planning application. But more than just part of bureaucratic practice, digital consultations are imbued in ethical and ideological debates about how property development should be done with and for communities. In this paper, I argue consultation technologies contain a complex entanglement of care ethics and economic interests (D’Avella, 2019), which are either patched up together or intricately woven. I use the term ethical bricolage to describe the variety of ways in which care and economic interests are employed in the development, marketing, and application of digital consultation.

Tech companies believe that the average person’s attention span is low, they are too busy to engage, and have bigger priorities than local property developments. The technologies claim to increase democratic participation by capturing those who are “hard to reach” or don’t often participate due to poor knowledge or interest. Further, they can capture a larger population than traditional consultation methods, and so, the technologies also make the consultation process more efficient, scalable, and advantageous for planning approval for developers.

The technology companies who create digital platforms construct new ethical frameworks that treat care and economic interests as complementary entities in the business planning context, as opposed to competing or mutually exclusive. It is interesting because consultation technology exists in a literature that often positions technology as something for which you cannot care and scale at the same time (Tsing, 2012), when, actually, throughout the production of digital technologies, care is deployed specifically in order to scale (Seaver, 2021). Scale is understood as ethical as it expands democracy and ‘social good’ through technology.

Public distrust towards planners and developers (Grosvenor, 2019) and big data technology, means it is important to complicate binary issues within the ethics of technology and property development. The paper will draw on interviews with consultation platform companies based in London, UK. By focusing on individuals and companies, I suggest the ethical bricolage among digital consultation professionals is a result of a broader lack of policy guidance for technological practices in planning consultations.
Understanding the role of business and philanthropy in producing university territory

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Abstract

Many public universities now receive most of their funding from either commercial activities and industry partnerships, or private philanthropic donations, particularly for research. The role of private capital in funding new ‘innovation spaces’ and cultural and educational buildings has been an under-examined element of the ‘enterprise university’ research agenda. Drawing on case studies from Australian and US universities, the paper examines how very large donations relate to the wider embeddedness of the donor in the urban economies of each region, and the evolution of each university. It addresses the following questions. How are universities programming commercial research and development facilities into their campuses, such as through co-location in innovation precincts and public-private partnerships? How are philanthropist-led ‘grand challenges’ impacting on university development strategies? What is the link between human capital endowments and building and infrastructure endowments? Do such private capital endowments also alter the research focus of the university? The paper concludes by theorising the role of philanthropy within the wider financialisation of university business models.
Glissant’s *Opacity*: implications for relationality and geographic methodologies

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**Abstract**

Bringing Edouard Glissant’s (1997) concepts of “Relation” and ‘opacity’ into conversation with non-representational geographies’ interest in relational ontologies (Roberts 2019), this paper will seek to re-affirm the importance of relational ontologies for geographic thinking and explore the methodological implications of research in a not-always-transparent world. Geographers have engaged with his work relating to post-colonial and race theorisations. This paper will develop these ideas through non-representational theory, in conversation with Deleuze and Guattari’s thought, to contribute to disciplinary efforts to problematise individualism. Relational ontologies have been central to this task, however these have recently come under criticism for ignoring “finitude and the problems that the nonrelational poses” (Bissell, Rose & Harrison 2021: 3). Rather than turning away from relationality, this paper considers how the incommunicable and unintelligible need not be engaged as proof of the ‘non-relational’, since for Glissant, “relationality does not necessitate or imply transparence” (Last 2018: 74). Since it posits an alternative model of ‘understanding’ based on opacity rather than transparency, Glissant’s work therefore has important implications for geographic methodologies too, which align with non-representational theory’s inclinations: “To understand...truly one must focus on the texture of the weave and not on the nature of its components... give up this odd obsession with discovering what lies at the bottom of natures.” (Glissant 1997: 190).

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Heritage, Anti-Heritage or Alternative Heritage: Graffiti and Street Art as Acts of Resistance, Transformation and Recovery

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Abstract

The principles of conservation and preservation in heritage and the subcultural rules within modern graffiti and street art practices can often be seen to conflict with one another, as these art forms resist the process of ‘heritagisation’ due to the subculture’s focus on ideas such as authenticity, temporality and continual erasure (Merrill, 2014, 369). When theorising on this disjuncture, graffiti researchers have suggested taking ‘anti-heritage’, ‘alternative heritage’ (Ibid), or ‘DIY’ approaches to heritage management (Graves-Brown and Schofield, 2010, 1398-99), reflecting how graffitists may not be seeking authorised heritage responses and may be open to, or even actively encouraging of, loss and erasure. Graffiti, however, can be defined through a plurality of meanings depending on period and place. Consequently, how can heritage management acknowledge the multiple different, yet overlapping, subcultures that exist within the wider graffiti movement, whilst also considering how those who create graffiti but may not identify as graffitists, and thus may not see their practices as having to adhere to the subcultural rules of anti-preservation, such as temporality and erasure. Alongside outlining some of these alternative heritage approaches, this paper will also consider examples where heritage and graffiti may be, inherently, closely aligned. For example, this paper seeks to demonstrate how graffiti and street art can be used to highlight past and present social injustices, the political aspects of heritage and the harm that perpetuating violent heritage narratives can cause. Rather than solely viewing graffiti as a destructive art form, this paper will consider the ways in which graffiti has the potential to form part of a process of transformation and recovery within our shared and public spaces. Examples to be discussed include Axel Void’s Peterloo Mural in Manchester, graffiti left on the Robert E. Lee statue in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the graffiti art of Valparaíso, Chile.
Political Boundaries, Digital Lives, and the Space In-between: A Netnography of Conspiracy

Alexis Wood
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Abstract

Encompassing rural Northern California and Southern Oregon are the boundaries of a long-standing state secessionist movement called the State of Jefferson. Iterations of this movement date back to 1850 which have ebbed and flowed in popularity. However with the introduction of Facebook and Facebook Groups, the State of Jefferson movement has been given new life. At one level, the rise of social media platforms has provided an ease of political organization over a large and rural geography - supporters hundreds of miles apart craft and execute large protests and legal action against the state. What is less obvious is how this exercise in boundary creation in digital landscapes becomes embedded in the emotional landscapes of the region. This continuous process becomes increasingly complex as the digital landscapes in question are marred by claims of “fake news” and misinformation. Drawing upon a four-month netnography conducted during the 2021 Newsom recall election, this paper argues two main points: first, this interaction of digital and emotional landscapes, characterized by feelings of anxiety and paranoia, restructure spatial relations; and second, lived spatialities and perspectives on reality are shaped by this interaction between the emotional and digital landscape - having serious implications for rural identity and politics at every level.
The Green Belt, Strategic Planning and Urban Development Patterns

Charles Goode
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

A fundamental idea behind Garden Cities, New Towns and Green Belts was that people would live, work, and play in the same place. The growth of London and other major English cities would be restricted by Green Belt and population alongside jobs would be decentralised to (supposedly) self-sufficient and self-contained New Towns.

This paper critically examines have far the reality of Green Belts and New Towns have matched the optimistic hopes of their advocates.

Firstly, it takes a historical approach exploring how several factors resulted in the distance between home and employment increasing for most people in the post-war era. These factors include the limited decentralisation of employment, significant extensions to the Green Belt in the 1970s/80s, unexpected economic and population growth and the rapid growth in personal mobility, facilitated by primarily by the car but also by improvements in rail travel.

The paper then explores the current impact of the Green Belt on development and transport patterns largely based upon qualitative data (73 interviews with planning stakeholders). The paper explores the key, more general issue of limited integration between transport planning and land-use planning for housing growth with governance being a fundamental issue, especially in England’s largely localist planning system. The Green Belt often prevents or makes it very difficult for development to take place in the most sustainable location (often next to existing settlements or near transport hubs). However, they also restrict unsustainable growth patterns, like ribbon development, and the paper explores examples of managed Green Belt release for housing growth. It therefore concludes that urban growth and Green Belts need to be managed strategically for the long term.
Exploring rural communities’ resilience to natural hazards: a participatory disaster simulation scenario looking beyond response and recovery to resilience

Sonja Mueller, Caroline Orchiston, Sophie Bond
University of Otago, New Zealand

Abstract

Resilience to the repeated impacts of secondary and cascading natural hazards is specific to the diverse strengths, weaknesses, priorities, environments, and cultures of the rural communities in which those hazards occur. One challenge lies in transforming general conceptual ideas of resilience from guiding documents like the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Sustainable Development Goals, and national policies, into relevant, practical, and beneficial community scale actions to enhance resilience in local contexts. Currently, the academic literature contains very few examples of participatory studies involving community collaboration to support collective local efforts to build resilience. This research aimed to contribute to the literature by identifying steps and pathways to enhance community resilience through a participatory, scenario-based approach. Using a qualitative and geospatial methodology, community members and researchers constructed and workshopped a disaster simulation scenario based on the significant seismic risk presented by the Alpine Fault in New Zealand. In the scenario, co-created maps and sticky note brainstorms facilitated a sequence of group discussions on the community’s current level of resilience, likely hazards and impacts, and long-term recovery. Finally, participants reflected on the scenario and identified practical actions to enhance resilience in their community. Findings show how participatory scenario-based approaches can support pathways to enhance community resilience that are specific to local contexts and the communities’ strengths, priorities, and values beyond recovery.
Understanding the gap: who travels actively and who wants to travel actively?

Jamie Furlong
University of Westminster, UK

Abstract

In response to Covid-19, the English government created an Active Travel Fund to support local authorities to produce new cycle lanes, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, pedestrian crossings, and pavement extensions to encourage active travel. With the climate, energy, and financial crises intensifying, these schemes may be ever more important though have been controversial, particularly around who they might benefit. While there is significant research about who uses existing infrastructure to travel actively, less is known of the population that may benefit most from these new schemes – those that self-identify as potential ‘switchers’ to active travel.

This research uses a new, TfL-funded Travel and Places survey to analyse the sociodemographic, social network and geographic characteristics of people in London who would like to ‘switch’ to cycling/walking or ‘switch away’ from driving. We compare their characteristics with those that already travel actively and use logistic regression modelling to identify what predicts being a potential ‘switcher’. We show that: the youngest age group, lower income households and women are more likely potential ‘switchers’ to cycling; men are more likely potential ‘switchers’ to walking; and those that already walk or cycle are more likely to want to stop driving. Most critically, there is clear evidence of a desire to walk and cycle more in car-dominated areas furthest from existing active travel infrastructure. This suggests that focusing new infrastructure on under-represented groups and areas could lead to an increase in walking and cycling.
Labor at the infrastructural interface: automating airport work

Dylan Brady, Weiqiang Lin
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Abstract

Drawing on a case study of two Chinese COVID-era airports, this paper rethinks automation through the notion of the interface. At the interface, automation appears not as a struggle between labor and machine but as a means for reconfiguring service labor: transforming work tasks, but also redistributing them between worker and consumer. Within air travel, automation in check-in and boarding has often taken the form of digitally mediated interfaces which shift the “work” of travel onto passengers. The pandemic has created new demand for such automation while also adding an entirely new set of testing and vaccination verification processes to air travel.

Examining interviews with workers at Beijing’s two airports, Capital International and Daxing International, we ask two questions about airport automation. First, how have the technological changes of digital automation transformed the work of passengers and personnel at airport interfaces? Second, how has automation enabled or led to the redistribution of work tasks? We argue that airport workers are ‘left’ with a different set of work responsibilities at airport interface(s): monitoring the work of passengers and compensating for technical limitations.

This study contributes to the geography of labor by highlighting the role of automation in transforming and redistributing, rather than eliminating, the work of paid employees. Our theorization of interfaces reveals their role in mediating not just between digital and material spheres, but between the spheres of consumption and production as well, opening up discussion on a whole array of complex automation relations that transcend beyond the airport.
Measuring the integrated social impacts of road infrastructure projects

Joanna Barrow, Karen Lucas
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

This paper presents an applied methodology to assess the cumulative and integrated social impacts of road infrastructure projects on local communities. Drawing on international examples across multiple disciplines, this study sought to identify a range of relevant social indicators and metric, the aim being to capture a holistic perspective to incorporate indicators such as health, wealth and wellbeing.

In England, the construction of large road structures often attracts public controversy. Current practice in the proposal stage of this type of project usually involves measuring indicators such as travel times, noise and pollution levels and accident reduction. Such outputs may suggest positive strategic gains but can raise unforeseen challenges for local communities. Although public consultation is seen as beneficial to the development process within the national guidance, it is often non-existent, superficial and piecemeal. In the international context, major funders of infrastructure projects (e.g. the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank) provide substantial grants for clients to conduct in-depth feasibility case studies in consultation with local stakeholders to identify issues and understand opinions relating to the local context. The main issues identified must then be mitigated prior to drafting any proposals.

This exploratory study, funded by National Highways, involved an international literature review, desk-based research and in the field case studies. Case studies included the collection of survey data and in-depth focus group discussions. The outcomes suggest a more comprehensive and locally sensitive system is needed to inform more socially sustainable future road infrastructure projects.
Behavioural Science Messaging Trials: Supporting Public Transport Confidence, Wearing of Face Coverings and Completion of Self-Isolation After International Travel During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Pete Dyson, Pranim Kariyawasam
Department for Transport, UK

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic required continuous learning about the SARS-CoV-2 virus and how people reacted to new and changing travel requirements. Given the evolving policy context, the Department for Transport (DfT) officials sought a better understanding of how citizens travelling on public transport were adapting and how to best support them. There was a particular need to study the impact of novel Covid-19 safety interventions such as wearing face coverings whilst travelling and self-isolating after international travel.

To tackle these issues, and inform key government decision making, the Department commissioned Kantar Public to conduct three projects combining quantitative and qualitative research with insights from academic literature and experts from across government. Each project produced and tested options for policy interventions that DfT could consider or recommend to its partners.

Given the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, natural field experiments were not feasible and rapid results were necessary to inform immediate policy decision making. We conducted a series of online behavioural science trials to overcome this. Each study had c2,900 adults across the UK, and made use of online focus groups and simulations of passenger journeys and experiences via a 'behaviour change lab' - an online randomised control trial. These simulations comprised descriptions of public transport journeys and the 10 days of self-isolation after travel abroad.

Captured in these journeys were the various government adverts and text messages that people in real life equivalents would expect to see. These messages acted as touch points to implement interventions. These interventions were adjustments to current government messaging that drew from various behavioural science perspectives such as expressing gratitude, emphasising enforcement, or highlighting Covid-19 safety measures such as extra cleaning on public transport.

These studies helped inform various policy decisions made throughout the pandemic by providing insights into the factors including barriers to compliance; factors that boosted compliance; and factors that encouraged more transport planning.

The presentation will bring together key findings from the three research studies. From these studies, we were able to assess the effectiveness of current messaging and suggest potential tweaks that might boost a desired behaviour.
Impacts of Active Travel Interventions in Outer London: results from a six-year longitudinal study

Rachel Aldred¹, Anna Goodman²
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Abstract

This talk will present some key impacts of Outer London’s ‘Mini-Holland interventions’, a £100m programme to improve walking and cycling infrastructure in three boroughs. We studied these interventions through a six-year longitudinal study, People and Places, funded by Transport for London, which used an annual online questionnaire to compare changes in transport behaviour and attitudes in control and intervention groups. The study used a ‘natural experiment’ approach mapping intervention areas and routes and measuring participant home location in relation to these annually. Travel diaries showed that especially in areas with the most ambitious interventions, there was good evidence of walking and cycling growing, and some evidence of reduced car ownership and/or use. Modelling using the DfT Active Mode Appraisal tools suggests that this increased active travel will lead to a health economic benefit many times larger than the schemes’ cost, due to increases in physical activity and reduced absenteeism. Attitudinal research showed that despite most of the increased active travel being walking, the changes were widely perceived as cycling interventions. Specifically, ‘local environment quality’ indicators for cycling improved in all intervention groups, but non-cycling items did not do so consistently. Finally, interventions proved controversial even at baseline and before anything had been built, although there was some evidence this controversy reduces over time. The talk concludes by suggesting some key lessons from this for policy and practice, and areas for future research.
Abstract

Against a background of growing research interest in transport and mobility justice, transport-policy discourses appear themselves to be increasingly featuring concepts of equity and fairness. But the connections between the two worlds are not as strong as they could be: researchers, in particular, can be guilty of going so deeply into theory or building such complex accessibility models that the applicability of their work to policy making is placed in doubt.

This observation has motivated the project that will be reported in this paper. Funded by the University of Westminster’s Policy Support Fund, Transport justice – putting principles into practice is designed to create an effective dialogue between researchers and policy-makers who share an interest in addressing transport injustice. A day-long workshop will provide an opportunity for researchers to “display their wares”, for policy-makers to articulate their needs, and for the two constituencies to debate the application of the former to the latter. This will be followed by a period of support for a number of participating UK-based authorities, during which the authors will provide practical assistance in the development and implementation of policies aimed at addressing transport injustice.

This paper will present findings and reflections on the project and will offer insights into future collaborations between academia and government on transport justice and related topics.
Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England

Tom Jarvis
Transport for the North, UK

Abstract

This paper discusses the causes, extent, and distribution of transport-related social exclusion (TRSE) in the North of England. To do so, it draws on new primary research undertaken with over 3,000 members of the public, stakeholders, and experts across the North, and on a geosocial data analysis of the risk of TRSE across diverse local area contexts. This combines a transport accessibility analysis with indicators of the vulnerability of the population to social exclusion, and provides a systematic means of estimating variations in the risk of TRSE at the Middle Layer Super Output (MSOA) level.

The data analysis presented in this paper estimates that 3.3 million people in the North of England – 21.7% of the population - live in areas where there is a significant risk of TRSE. These are areas in which there is the combination of poor access to key destinations by public transport and active travel, and high vulnerability to social exclusion based on local economic conditions, the demographics of the population, and multiple deprivation. It demonstrates that these areas are widely distributed across the North, but are particularly concentrated in former manufacturing and mining legacy areas, and in industrial and multi-ethnic communities.

As well as demonstrating the causes of these variations in TRSE, this paper discusses the methodological challenges inherent in measuring TRSE, and how this issue can be better integrated in transport planning and decision-making processes.
Disrupting Hierarchy Thinking and Modal Mindsets in Transport

David Beeton, Paul Cowie
Urban Foresight Ltd, UK

Abstract

The transport hierarchy has become a foundational model in British transport strategy. It is widely used as a blueprint for sustainable transport planning and as a justification for billions of pounds of public investment.

But how did a model that was originally developed as road safety guidance become the default strategy for sustainable transport?

This paper reviews the limitations of contemporary interpretations of the transport hierarchy. It questions whether the focus on ‘modal shift’ has created a siloed and adversarial mindset amongst policymakers and road users. It also explores whether ‘hierarchy thinking’ is delaying urgent and obvious actions to tackle major social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Recommendations are made for a more people-centric, evidence-based, and outcome-focused approach. This draws on practical experience of developing sustainable transport plans and net zero strategies across the UK and around the world. It also takes account of the new technologies, business models, and end-user behaviours that are changing the way that we travel, work, and access services.
Negotiated Street ‘Closures’ of Grassroots Origins in São Paulo and London: Infrastructural democracy as experiential process

Denver Nixon¹, Tim Schwanen²
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Abstract

There exists in the literature an unacknowledged tension between those that suggest that soft infrastructural initiatives, or “improvised remedies” (Tonkiss 2015:389), better serve diverse and/or underserved communities versus those that claim these informal interventions are decidedly undemocratic. Street closures, and the controversies sometimes associated with them, may clearly exemplify the nuances of this tension. This paper explores the relationships between community-led walking and cycling organizations attempting street closures in London and São Paulo, the governments that approve, oversee, shut down, or appropriate these grassroots initiatives, and the citizens and businesses that push back, experience, concede, and/or embrace the infrastructural transformations. The street closures themselves range in geographic scale and temporal duration and periodicity, and have a variety of target beneficiaries, from low-income children and youth to all citizens on foot or cycle. Our interpretive analysis suggests that besides the immediate (and sometimes transient) benefits these grassroots-initiated street closures bring to some groups—particularly those with disadvantaged positions in the mobility milieux—their experimental, experientially demonstrative, dynamic and often negotiated nature represent alternative infrastructural interventions that aim for (but do not always realize) consensus and ultimately guide larger scale efforts to achieve just and sustainable mobility transitions. In this way these social infrastructures may augment the spatial and temporal boundaries of formal representative democracy and foreground the importance of embodied experience in informed participatory decision making on mobility infrastructures.
Manawa Ora/Critical Hope: Supporting tamariki/children’s citizenship capabilities in chaotic climate futures

Bronwyn Hayward¹, Kate Prendergast¹, Bronwyn Wood², Sacha McMeeking¹, Sara Tolbert¹, Niki Harre³

¹University of Canterbury, New Zealand. ²Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. ³University of Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

How can we support young citizens facing chaotic climate futures? This is an urgent question particularly for children of marginalised and Indigenous communities who face disproportionate risks of climate change. While thousands of young New Zealanders joined school climate strikes, there is little agreement about how to support children’s capabilities to act as ecological citizens. Since the 1970s, education and behaviour literature has focused largely on addressing climate change through the acquisition of scientific knowledge in instrumental ways, while encouraging individual responsible action. However, these approaches fail to support children to develop the collective citizenship and emotional capabilities they need to address the climate crisis as a complex, systemic, social, political and ecological problem. This paper reviews the literature on intergenerational, deliberative methods for early-adolescents aged 10 to 14 years in communities facing climate risks. We examine how retelling local stories/pūrākau that draw on past experiences of collaboration/whānaungatanga, can strengthen the collective adaptive capacity and manawa ora/critical hope of young citizens as they learn to develop skills and strategies to act in trust with others, to effect change.

2. Cretney R. and Hayward B. 2019 Student Strike 4 Climate: Justice, emergency and citizenship. New Zealand Geographer. 75:1, 96-100;
The politics of smart urbanism: How smart housing is (re)structuring power in urban India

Syeda Jenifa Zahan
DIST, Polytechnic of Turin, Italy

Abstract

In this short intervention I will introduce my role in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. I am an USF Postdoctoral Research Fellow. My research focuses on how smart city developments are reshaping the landscape of housing in Delhi, India. By locating smart city developments within historical trajectories of urban development, and in particular housing developments in Delhi, I argue that smart housing developments are restructuring, rescaling, and consolidating new social, economic, and political power structures and processes, especially that of the Indian state. I undertake a multi-scalar and longitudinal analysis of geographies of power and their (re)structuring to further investigate how new geographies of power engage with marginalities and difference in the housing sector.
Sub-national paths to neoliberal reforms: Regional variations in urban data regimes in India

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Abstract

This paper’s starting hypothesis is that the nature of socio-spatial justice embedded in the rolling-out of Smart Cities in India calls for a reflection at the crossroads of the idea of disruption (Stiegler 2016) and a historical institutionalism approach (North 1990). We observe that the existing smart cities research in India is located at / situated either in the discursive understanding of the “Indian idea of smart” (Datta 2015) or analysis of selected cities’ experiments (Prasad et al. 2022). We take a step away from this approach to argue that the dialogical relationship between data-driven urbanism and institutional rescaling is embedded into subnational histories of construction of a collective identity and the contemporary adoption of neoliberal municipal reforms (introduction of private actors, e-governance and human resources reforms). Based on qualitative interviews with government officials and politicians in three Indian states (Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab), this paper notices the emergence of welfarist and exclusive variegation of ‘urban data regimes’ under the Smart Cities Mission at provincial scales in the country. The paper argues that the adopted regional comparison lens also contributes to the renewal of comparative urbanism.

References:


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How the energy trilemma affects public acceptance of hydrogen

Fiona Fylan
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Abstract

The commitment to a net zero future, and the subsequent requirement to eliminate emissions from domestic fuels, means that there will be fundamental changes to the way in which people heat their homes. Hydrogen is currently being explored as one option, and both the technical and social challenges that this presents are being explored. In this paper we explore how the energy trilemma affects public acceptance of hydrogen, i.e. the effects of energy affordability, security, and sustainability. We present the results from a series of interviews with residents of an area in the North East of England, typical of areas likely to be involved in hydrogen generation in the future. We show how recent geopolitical developments, concerns over the rising cost of fuel bills, together with a growing awareness of the changes necessary to meet a net zero future, have impacted on perceptions and acceptance of hydrogen.
From unlearning to relearning: postcolonial geographies of responsibility and solidarity

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\textsuperscript{1}Newcastle University, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Oxford Brooks University, UK. \textsuperscript{3}Middlesex University, UK

Abstract

This paper seeks to extend the applicability of Gayatri Spivak’s mantras (primarily directed at Western colleagues) for ‘unlearning one’s privilege as one’s loss’ and ‘learning to learn from below’ to postcolonial scholars who go ‘home’ to do fieldwork. It recounts three vignettes from our personal fieldwork experiences of doing research in our home countries of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh to illustrate the relearning that we have experienced.

We argue that the circularity of our postcolonial experience (illustrated in the journey of a scholar from the global South travelling to the western academy to study and then going back home to do fieldwork and returning to the academy to write up the research for a western academic audience) necessitates that we cast a more critical eye on the ways in which scholars of the global South can run the risk of becoming complicit in imperial knowledge production. We ask - How do you ‘learn to learn from below’ as a scholar from the global South trained in the Northern academy? What are the notions of class, ethnicity and privilege that provide the assumptions for the subjectivity of the scholar who needs to learn from below? How open are the Northern academy to accept ‘things do not fit in’ in their parochial research agenda? We focus specifically on three guiding strategies which have underlined our experiences namely - learning without guarantees of outcome, taking the risk of responsibility and making cautious claims to marginality. By focusing on the relational nature of privilege, we show how as specifically classed, raced and gendered women from the global South we get permission to create and access different forms of knowledge in the global North.
Cultivating Feminist Solidarity: Youthful Strategies Towards a Politics of Hope in India’s Farmers’ Movement, 2020-2021

Ananya Bhuyan
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Abstract

In October 2020, at the height of the pandemic and amidst heightened state-controlled surveillance measures, India’s farmers’ movement against the new farm laws began to crystallise as a key node of opposition to both neoliberalism and Hindu nationalism in India. Though agrarian movements are not new in India, this emergent mass movement is unique in its diverse support and alliance base. Indian youth activists were crucial to this movement, serving as cohesive bonds to extend and consolidate solidarities, based on the ethics of care and support, to make claims on the state which resulted in positive legislative changes in late 2021.

In recent scholarship, many expressions of solidarity are moments of “coming together against” a (perceived) common enemy, by diverse participants with inter/intra-struggles over the making of everyday sectional experiences of multiple structures of oppression. However, drawing on empirical research with the aforementioned youth activists, this paper utilises a feminist lens to contrast such moments with more intrinsic expressions of “coming together with”, i.e., building solidarities across differences of age, gender, caste, class, and religion.

This is thus, a critical interrogation of the multiple senses in which young people enact their agency and adapt their strategies to come together in social, political, embodied, and emotional movement across violent structures of power and difference, as they are pulled into an even more complex terrain of political constraints and affordances during the pandemic. This has significance for feminist geography’s political undertakings in understanding the “we” that forms solidarities, both as a concept and a practice, to create and configure, justice-oriented outcomes beyond recovery - towards a politics of hope and transformation.
The Dynamics and Politics of Housing Precarity and struggle for Housing Justice at the intersections of Governance and Urban Development

Oluwafemi Olajide
Beyond Inhabitation Lab, Polytechnic of Turin, Italy. Urban and Regional Planning, University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

This presentation introduces my role and research project in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab and the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, which seeks to investigate the politics of inhabitation globally. On this project, my focus is on the dynamics and politics of housing precarity and struggle for housing justice at the intersections of governance and urban development ideology that promotes and perpetuates different forms of structural violence, exclusion, and social injustices. This will be placed in a specific geographic, historic, and social context in sub-Sharan cities (Lagos, Cape Town and Nairobi), connecting the colonial and the contemporary people’s lived experiences of urban development, housing precarity and mobilising for housing justice.

While socio-spatial exclusion remains a significant feature of urban development in many African cities, grassroot collective actions against exclusionary urban development are on the increase. I reckon that the contemporary housing precarity is a continuation of the past institutional structure of colonial racial capitalism which historically promoted structural inequality. This is now happening within the context of neoliberal development as a dominant ideology structuring production of space for urban (re)development.

My research brings together combined literature which advances the theoretical discourse of governance-development-society relations and nuanced discourse of the politics of grassroot mobilisation for housing justice at the intersections of governance and urban development and socioeconomic and social demographic categorisations (gender, tribes/ethnicity, livelihood asset portfolios...). It will be underpinned by the combined theoretical discourse of social movement, right to the city and insurgent planning within the wider governance and development questions in Africa. It will critique neoliberal development and colonial racial capitalism as a form of ideological hegemony and power domination structuring the politics of housing struggles in many African cities. It will take a postcolonial and decolonial modes of inquiry, drawing on critical and radical urban theories.
Relational aid in protracted crisis: South Sudanese refugees in Uganda

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Abstract

Gaining prominence after the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit’s call for localization of humanitarian aid, ‘local responders’ in the form of crisis-affected populations and civic humanitarians have gotten more attention in humanitarian discourse. In this article, we build on research conducted among South Sudanese refugees in Uganda to analyse how crisis affected populations and their neighbors work to support themselves and each other, and how this form of assistance intersects with formal and informal humanitarian aid mechanisms over time. Through this, we explore the boundaries of what counts as ‘aid’, what counts as ‘humanitarian’, and what constitutes ‘the local’. Lastly, we discuss what would be the implications of a broadened understanding of humanitarianism where crisis-affected people and their neighbors are recognized as the ‘essential heart of humanitarian action’.
Friendships at Work: An Ethnography of Recovery and Rebuilding by Women in Delhi’s Neighbourhoods

Vanshika Singh, Syeda Asia, Lakshay Talwar, Shivangi Gupta, Aashna Gutgutia

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Abstract

This paper explores the work of women collectives towards recovery and rebuilding of neighbourhoods during COVID-19 in three slums and urban villages of Delhi. Foregrounding their solidarity in friendships, our paper highlights ways in which women exercise their agency in providing relief, building alternative livelihoods and propelling civic engagement, with a vision to create a significant shift in neighbourhood character. Using case studies from Bhatti Mines, Yamuna Vihar and Seemapuri, the paper reflects on complexities of spatial patriarchies and the methodologies women adopt to claim public spaces in their everyday for negotiations with local governance bodies, police, private contractors, NGOs, medical institutions, and legal and para-legal institutions. It compares different scales of operations such as close to 500 women collectivising in Sanjay Colony - a refugee settlement and erstwhile colony of miners, over 70 waste workers coming together in Seemapuri, and women who encountered both, religious violence and the pandemic, strategically running a professional centre in Yamuna Vihar. It sheds light on key aspects of their journey - starting from ration and food distribution during the pandemic to now creating livelihoods, building essential infrastructures, and participating in electoral politics. The paper anchors intersectionality through their lived experiences of precarity and complex interplay of caste, religious, and linguistic identities in their work dynamics. Through mapping shifts in work from daily wage construction work, waste work and informal supply chain inclusions, the paper nudges newer interpretations on feminist solidarity with the lens of women's efforts for neighbourhood development through intimate friendships.
Feminist activism and solidarities in the making of urban India

Syeda Jenifa Zahan
Urban Studies Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellow, DIST, Polytechnic of Turin, Italy

Abstract

This paper focuses on issues of gendered solidarities in young women’s activism against gender-based violence in Delhi, India. Solidarity has remained a key frame of reference in feminist activism across the world both as a tool of action and end-goal. Questions regarding solidarities, subjectivities and intersectional inequalities also remain central to young women’s political struggles against violence in Delhi. Within this context, this paper focuses on the works of Pinjra Tod collective who emerged as a strong voice against institutionalised patriarchies and gendered control over young women’s lives in the city. In this presentation, I will examine the ways in which the Collective frame the issues of gendered violence and its solidarity-based activism grounded in young women’s shared experiences of violence to chart the pathways for more inclusive urban conditions and spaces. Yet, solidarity is also a contentious formulation. There are potential risks of cooption, paternalism, and reproduction of unequal power relations in solidarity-based activism. Drawing on key moments of ‘conflict’ within the Pinjra Tod collective, I will demonstrate how solidarity-based activism take place amidst intersectional inequalities and differences. I argue that solidarity, often expressed on the basis affinities, shared experiences, and visions, requires continued political engagements, and thus is never an end product. Instead, solidarity as a philosophical standpoint and as a practice takes shape in diverse ways and within the diversity and contradictions of young people’s political subjectivities.
Reimagining Feminist Futures from a Coal Frontier

Thembi Luckett¹, Francina Nkosi²
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Abstract

The town of Lephalale in the northern Waterberg region of South Africa has been heralded as the future hub of power generation in South Africa, particularly with the construction of Medupi coal power station – celebrated by the ANC government as “creating a better life for all”, despite the destruction, dispossession and debt burden left in the wake of this resource extractivist mega project. In this context, the agency of ordinary people is often destroyed, with some reflecting that “we are nothing in Lephalale”. However, in recent times, organisations such as the Waterberg Women’s Advocacy Organisation (WWAO) have emerged, driven by women and youth who are at the forefront of shifting the political, economic and social terrain of Lephalale and the wider Waterberg region. WWAO works to address intersecting issues of climate change and a just transition from fossil fuels, gender-based violence, and the Covid-19 crisis amongst other issues. Beyond the structured organisation, networks of conviviality and care amongst women exist, generating relations of “togetherness needed to endure the precarious present” (Ong & Rovisco, 2019, p. 151). In the context of interlinking crises, with shrinking futures and horizons of possibility, women not only experience the greatest burdens but also open up possibilities for collective reimaginings. This paper aims to unpack some of these practices and processes of generating solidarities as well as challenges that feminists in the global South face through a conversation between activist scholars inside and outside the academy.
Contesting scarcity...one raindrop at the time. Learning from alterontological practices of grassroot

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Abstract

Water scarcity is the leitmotif with which semi-arid areas of India enter public policy debates. A political strategy to divert attention from socio-environmental injustices grounded in the history of colonialism, patriarchy, and caste discriminations, naturalized scarcity framings validate techno-scientific solutions that are unable to transform rainfed environments beyond depoliticized ideas of drought recovery and resiliency. In the midst of climate emergencies driving what (Mehta et al., 2019) describes as a ‘new politics of scarcity’ to these regions, this paper takes a feminist decolonial approach, one that is generative, speculative and hopeful, to explore the growing mobilization and activism of those resisting scarcity framing with new vocabularies, conceptions, ideas.

I draw from ethnographic insights from the Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRAN), an Indian-based platform of civil society organizations that works to transform the ways we understand rainfed regions as diverse and dynamic territories, site for positive rural transformations and hopeful futures. Recognizing that “there is no social and cognitive justice without existential justice” (Savransky, 2017), I understands the politics of RRAN as crafting ‘alterontologies’ (Papadopoulos 2018), new forms of life that rearrange human and nonhuman configurations in mundane and often unexpected ways. Rather than as direct opposition to established institutions and systems of power, RRAN alterontological practices challenge the absences (de Sousa Santos, 2015) produced through scarcity politics by proposing ‘the rainfall’ as a place to reimagine alternative ecologies of being and knowing. Learning from RRAN mobilization, I discuss how ‘starting from the rainfall’ provides a way to repopulate ‘absences’ with ‘emergences’, fostering more-than-human solidarities and feminist practices of care (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017) to compose socio-environmentally just futures.
Entrenching Covid capitalism in the global garment industry: Labour struggles under the “neoliberal disease” in authoritarian Cambodia

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused severe hardship for workers in the global garment and footwear industry, where an estimated 80% of 70 million workers worldwide are women. These dynamics are best exemplified through the mass layoffs that grabbed global media headlines throughout 2020, but are also revealed on the ground in slower, everyday practices of workplace restructuring taking place as a result of the pandemic. In this paper, we draw on original data from the GCRF-funded ReFashion project to trace the contours of an emergent Covid capitalism in Cambodia’s garment industry and its entrenchment through renewed union repression. ReFashion is a longitudinal study combining repeat quantitative surveys and qualitative follow-ups with a cohort of 200 workers over 24 months, as well as further interviews and observations with garment sector stakeholders including labour unions in Cambodia. Covid capitalism here, we argue, is underscored by deepening reliance on techniques of flexibilization and intensification in an already precarious and highly pressurised feminised workplace. In an increasingly authoritarian country context, hostile to civil society and trade union organisation, the possibilities of women’s resistance against the worsening terms of their employment are being bound further by an intensification of labour repression under the guise of Covid-19 economic and public health responses. Bridging emerging work on the co-pathogenesis of Covid-19 as a “neoliberal disease” (Sparke 2021) with calls for geographers to take a “more rigorous anti-authoritarian stance” (Simandan, Rinner, and Capurri 2022) to the pandemic response, in the paper we explore the misuse and abuse of social and health protections to fortify a long-term strengthening of the entwined forces of state and capital power against the interests of global labour.
Small rural grocery shops: Covid-19 lockdowns as an opportunity for their recovery?

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Abstract

In the Czech Republic, there was a decline in the number of grocery shops in small rural communities at the beginning of the millennium which continues up to this day. This is a problem for the elderly and socially disadvantaged people without a car, e.g., single parents. Overall, this threatens the economic and social status and attractiveness of the living on the countryside.

Grocery shops have also strong strategic importance. This was demonstrated during the lockdowns due to the Covid-19 epidemic. People were dependent on shopping in the home community or online grocery stores, which paradoxically could be an opportunity to recover small rural shops.

The aim of the paper is to identify the adaptation behaviour of inhabitants in commuting for daily goods (grocery) shopping at lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 in the height of the COVID-19 epidemic. The paper is specifically focused on the importance of the rural grocery shops in the home communities and online grocery shops.

A combination of questionnaire survey and semistructured interviews among representatives and inhabitants of South Moravian municipalities was conducted. The results were compared with similar investigations conducted in 2005 and 2018.

According to the conducted research, the commute for daily goods (grocery), regardless of lockdowns, is centralised to large communities, where supermarkets are located. The lockdown period in 2020 and 2021 increased purchases in home communities in the remaining moribund grocery shops. After the lockdowns and home office ended, purchases in rural grocery shops fell again. During lockdowns, the importance of online grocery shops increased. However, according to respondents, online grocery shops are a possible solution only for municipalities in the conurbation and for a select group of inhabitants who are computer literate. Online shops do not address the social role of rural shops.
Migrant Women on the Front Lines: Transnational Solidarity and Climate Justice

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Abstract

Almost a year after typhoon Haiyan ravaged the Visayas region of the Philippines on 8 November 2013, one Filipina domestic worker in New York laments, “my house until now has no roof. Everything was gone. The interior is all ruined. My brother’s livelihood, he used to have a piggery, now it’s all washed out... Now, I have to start from scratch” (Macaraig 2014, para. 5). She was reported saying this during the People’s Climate March, taking part in a cluster called, ‘Front Lines of Crisis / Forefront of Change,’ on September 2014 in NYC. She was 70 at that time, had been working for 20 years in American households, and was looking forward to retirement.

Her story forms the central observation of this presentation and thus, the contribution to the GFGRG session: as vulnerable bodies come together through mobilizing forces and climate justice movements, they envision climate and social justice that can support their caring practices in their home countries in the global South. As migrants or non-citizens, they occupy a position of legal, social, and economic marginalization in the United States. As well, they play a central role not only in disaster response and recovery in their home countries, in this case, the Philippines and Nepal. Migrant workers-collective actors articulate recovery through a call for a ‘system change’ wherein their intersecting rights on labor, health, gender, and immigration are placed to the center. Through their position of bearing witness to climate and social injustices, they envision a world in which their families and communities, in distant homelands, are not left behind.
Eco-heroes: feminist solidarities and just transition in South Africa

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Abstract

As South Africa re-bounces from the shocks of the Covid-19 pandemic, calls for a just transition have intensified. While it is anticipated that the switch will increase net employment, it is also likely that historical and contemporary inequalities will deepen. This form of difference or inequality will be exacerbated by the geographic disconnects and delays between job losses and creation. In other words, whereas some sectors and provinces will witness a surge in employment, the roles of some workers will become redundant. With arguably fewer women present in the labour force, this shift will heighten the existing lopsided labour force and plunge more women into deprivation, particularly amid burgeoning retrenchment in the (sub)national value chains. At the same time, the country has witnessed the proliferation of two movements: feminist solidarities, which represent the struggles and voices of women, and climate movements, advocating for a net-zero transition. Despite the inextricable link between their objectives, given that climate change will be a key determinant of the future job prospects of women, these movements continue to operate in silos. Against this backdrop, the paper draws from existing literature and explores ways through which these movements could jointly engender women’s economic empowerment in the process of transitioning to a net-zero economy.
Digital rights and the virtualisation of education in South America: An Indigenous peoples’ perspective

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Abstract

The virtualisation of education has become a crucial societal aspect during the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruption of lockdowns, quarantines, and social distancing measures created new challenging scenarios for education systems around the world. In South America, governments have responded to the crisis in different ways, adapting to their own economic, social, political, and infrastructural contexts. Across the region, these responses emphasise the formative aspects of education but still lack proper attention to the uneven access to energy and telecommunications infrastructure (Dávalos & Forero, 2020). These challenges are more acute for Indigenous peoples in rural areas, who also face high broadband prices (internet services in Bolivia are among the most expensive in the region, averaging USD$40 to USD$60, Pasquali, 2021).

This paper situates and examines the experiences of Indigenous people and peasants advocating for digital rights in the Chuquisaca Chaco, Bolivia, in particular, the struggles of Guarani communities for recovery in a post-pandemic context. The paper discusses the importance of these digital struggles at a time when the Bolivian state proved slow to provide the digital infrastructure necessary for Indigenous communities to access education in the Bolivian Chaco. This exploration shows how subsistence struggles intersect with the digital aspirations of educational continuity for children and young people through different economic practices (e.g. increasing small animal production to stock up on food to allocate more resources for internet services). The paper also highlights the digital and educational agendas emerging from these communities, particularly the role of Indigenous communities in formulating a national law that mitigates the effects of long-standing infrastructural and digital gaps (Capitanía Zona Macharetí et al., 2022). The paper thus provides an account of Indigenous struggles for digital rights and the democratisation of educational technologies in their territories.
Reflections on cultivating feminist solidarities through a women’s WhatsApp video story circle

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Abstract

In 2021, a feminist capacity-building program in Zimbabwe was in jeopardy as participants and facilitators were “locked-down”. The long-standing program was designed by a local NGO for (mostly rural) women. This is in a context where social norms tend to result in a high level of gender-based inequalities (especially in rural areas), including around digital literacy. Due to the need for remote learning and communication at this time, the organisers invited a friend with expertise in facilitation of community video-making to support the program.

We collaborated to deliver an 8-week online workshop series, with the intention of cultivating feminist solidarities in practice and through supporting video-based communication between the participants. Weekly workshops were co-facilitated by and for women, using Whatsapp. Research was undertaken alongside, aiming to examine the effectiveness of this digital storytelling workshop with regard to building women’s video-making capacities and more generally, in terms of supporting multi-dimensional empowerment processes with women during the pandemic.

Participants created audio and video stories, sharing accounts of “the power of collaboration” and women’s efforts in their communities. Semi-structured interviews with 13 participants revealed that a sense of solidarity had emerged through participation in the digital story circle, especially through co-developing capacities to produce audio/video stories. This was especially important to the women at a time when increasing levels of isolation and a sense of disempowerment had been experienced as a result of Covid regulations. Our results speak to debates around participatory methods and the emergent literature around ICT4D during the pandemic.
The role of orientation in community-based energy

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Abstract

This presentation analyses the importance of ‘orientation’ in grassroots community-based movements for energy justice. We take up the question of community because it’s our contention that togetherness, and specifically community, is crucial to finding a way to live well in an ecologically damaged world. However, the forms that community takes are beguiling. Community, at times concurrently, is used in a wide array of meanings, both progressively and regressively. Community can be used as a carapace, to exclude difference and to produce a homogenous, exclusive us vs them. Community, concurrently, can be used with a sense of porosity, a heterogenous and amorphous feeling of belonging which is defined not by identity but by an orientation, and a desire to pursue certain tasks. That is, community's relationship to solidarity and democracy is ambivalent. We want to hold onto this difference in this presentation by analysing the ways in which community can be put to use pursuing different tasks, or orientations. Fitting with this session, these orientations are often characterised by a certain stance towards the future: future-making. Specifically, we see the translation of community action into community policy as a moment where certain aspects of community which are often latent, pre-reflective, invisible, can be grasped and understood. It is in the tracing and analysing of how community transforms that this presentation focuses its analytical lens. In this talk, we will examine what happens when community—and community’s orientations—is translated from a mode of action to a form of policy. To that end, we rely on extensive ethnographic work with urban eco-community movements in Scotland, Luxembourg, and India, and also the policies that they regularly rub up against.
Hydrogen transitions, fuel poverty, and geographical research in the UK (and beyond)

Matthew Scott
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Abstract

Since the UK legislated in 2019 to end its contribution to global heating by 2050, it has become clear that eliminating emissions from domestic households is a significant challenge. All scenarios for meeting this challenge require a large proportion of UK homes to improve the thermal efficiency of their building fabric and switch to zero- or low-carbon heating. The use of hydrogen for home heating is one option for achieving the latter of these requirements, and a nascent field of geographical and wider social science research is beginning to consider the implications of hydrogen transitions. This presentation surveys this emerging hydrogen landscape from the point of view of a national fuel poverty charity, National Energy Action, that works to ensure that everyone can afford to keep their home warm and safe. It considers the opportunities and risks of hydrogen transitions for fuel poor households, and analyses some of the early initiatives by government, industry, and academia to develop the first stages of hydrogen for domestic heating. With an eye on the insights that geographically attuned analysis can provide, the broader aim of the presentation is highlight the problems and questions that hydrogen is beginning to pose – problems and questions that geographers, with their toolbox of interdisciplinary methods and techniques of analysis, would be well placed to address.
Decarbonizing mobility- the making and unmaking of (un)equal futures

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Abstract

Ethnographic perspectives on emerging post-carbon societies invite us to think either about the risks to democracy through the greening of capital ‘from above’ or the opportunities a politicization of related issues by social movements ‘from below’ provide (Müller/Everts 2020, Rajkovic 2020, Knight 2020). Yet post-carbon societies emerge from current power relations in an interconnected socio-political sphere. It is therefore rather pivotal to consider powerful actors and less powerful actors in relation to each other and the way less powerful groups form and advocate their interests. The politicization of inequality then constitutes the benchmark of a inclusive or exclusive handling of climate change mitigation. To better understand how inequalities influence decarbonization strategies in the mobility sector, we must therefore understand state and non-state actors in their engagement with and experiences of the same. Reflecting on preliminary research and interviews with local politicians, transport planners, and ordinary people who are part of the local mobility system and based on the methodological approach of studying through (Shore/Wright 2011), this paper suggests ways in which transport inequality is perceived and dealt with in the Saalekreis, a region targeted by state investments in the public transport network as well as market-oriented measures of CO2 tax and subsidies for e-cars. How are existing and emerging inequalities discussed by professional actors? How are social phenomena related to transport inequality, like car-induced economic stress, interpreted by affected groups? How do unevenly distributed mobilities relate to (political) subjectivities and positionalities?
The role of the historic environment in landscape recovery: some thoughts from the Lincolnshire Wolds

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Abstract

The European Landscape Convention emphasises that landscape is a cultural product in terms of both its formation and perception; cultural heritage and the historic environment are therefore relevant to any strategies for landscape recovery. And since the concept of ‘recovery’ implies a return to a previous (healthier) state, archaeological understanding of the historic landscape offers an important contribution to understanding what positive change might look like. This not only takes the form of recording specific heritage assets that contribute to the character of the landscape, and are deserving of protection in schemes like ELM, but more fundamentally provides the historical evidence base that can inform future landscapes, including habitat (re)creation and improving access for wellbeing.

In this presentation, which draws on the work of a research network funded through the Landscape Decisions Programme, we use the example of the Lincolnshire Wolds to consider the potential contribution of the historic environment (including archaeology and historic landscape character) to rural recovery, especially through creative approaches to engagement with past landscapes as a means of envisaging sustainable futures.
Platform reintermediation, gamification and (post-)pandemic futures of work in music: the case of Twitch

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Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the cultural and creative sectors, especially those relying on an audience for live performance, such as gigging musicians. Live music represents a vital source of income for musicians in a digital platform age in which a ‘value gap’ has emerged between music streaming platform profits and returns to artists. During a period in which COVID-19 has prevented artists from performing live shows in physical venues, exacerbating the already precarious position of many musicians vis-à-vis income, online income streams have become increasingly important for musicians, enabling them to ‘make do’ in impossible circumstances. Online platforms have emerged as a means through which artists can grow and monetise a fan base to generate income, and furthermore, we are now witnessing the gamification of music as musicians begin to perform on live streaming platforms pioneered by gamers, which allows fans to interact with performers, to donate directly to artists, and pay to access exclusive performances. In this article, we report the findings of British Academy-funded research into musician’s use of the Twitch live streaming platform. The research seeks to examine the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated pre-existing transformations in the world of online labour for musicians. We examine how development in gamification and the shift towards the ‘tip economy’ are enabling new forms of online income generation, yet, at the same time are requiring new and intensified forms of online labour. We also reflect on the classed and gendered nature of this work, giving recognition to both the barriers to entering live streaming, and the significant precarity of income from online platform labour. We argue that while online platform work has offered musicians a potential survival strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic, going forward beyond the pandemic it acts to reinforce, rather than break down, the existing class and gender barriers that characterise the creative industries.
Engendering Social Justice: Enduring Solidarities Across Time and Space

Tracey Skelton
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Abstract

As co-chair of this RGS-IBG Call for Papers with Dr Syeda Jenifa Zahan, an Urban Studies Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Polytechnic of Turin, we developed a focus on Global South Geographies and Feminist Solidarity for Just Recovery! Sponsored by the Gender and Feminist Geographies Research Group we directly engage with the theme of the Annual Conference, Geographies Beyond Recovery, in order to place the Majority World central and to recognise the importance of feminist and decolonial solidarity as potential ways forward beyond survival and resilience. Globally women and girls bear the brunt of crises, disasters, exploitation, inequalities, marginalisation, neoliberalism, responsibilities, violence, vulnerabilities and wars. Yet, women and girls still rise (Maya Angelou, Still I Rise 1978).

This session is designed to place feminist solidarity upfront and central at the same time as recognising the deep struggles marginalised people and communities experience situated along different intersectional power relations such as gender, class, race, caste, migration, age, and sexuality. The presentations delivered in our 2 sessions take us to global geographical sites: Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa, Zimbabwe but are contoured and woven into power geometries of the Global North.

Feminist solidarities work towards care, equality, inclusion, and friendship. As part of my presentation, I will personally reflect on aspects of powerful and enduring solidarity between two women who have resided between both the Global South and the Global North after our first meeting in 1986.
Talking in the Street or Voting with your Feet? Explaining Political Consensus in the Residential Environment

Daniel van Wijk
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Abstract

Already in the 1970s, Ron Johnston wrote about an empirical regularity in electoral geography, according to which different people in the same place vote in the same way while similar people in different places vote in different ways. In other words, there tends to be more political consensus among neighbours than what would be expected based on individual characteristics alone. Since then, the increasing availability of individual-level, nationally representative survey data, its connection to detailed information on the residential environment, and the ability to control for confounding factors using multilevel modelling methods have allowed more technically advanced approaches towards the study of voting behaviour of individuals within their contexts. Yet even with these advancements in data availability and statistical methods, the basic pattern of political consensus in the residential environment continued to be found.

In this presentation, I will first provide an overview of studies that have examined patterns of political consensus in the residential environment. I then move on to discuss the mechanisms that produce this consensus. Although most authors assume that consensus is a result of ‘conversion through conversation’ in the residential environment – i.e. a ‘neighbourhood effect’ – Ron Johnston has frequently noted that patterns of political consensus in the residential area provide only circumstantial evidence for the existence of neighbourhood effects, and alternative explanations remain plausible. I therefore discuss several mechanisms that can potentially produce the same pattern of local political consensus, and review the evidence for each. Finally, I outline several avenues for future research. Ron Johnston has been one of the key contributors to academic debates concerning the description and explanation of political consensus in the residential environment for almost half a century, and in the presentation I pay specific attention to (part of) his voluminous work on the topic.
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Imagining the State

Joe Painter
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Abstract

This paper takes its cue from Ron Johnston’s path-forming book on Geography and the State (Macmillan, 1982). Ahead of its time, Geography and the State sought to provide a clear, concise and critical account of what Johnston said was the ‘central object’ of political geography: the state. While it remains a valuable source, forty years on much has changed in political geography, state theory and the form and function of that central object. In this essay I will reflect on those changes and consider some of the themes and approaches that might guide geographical work on the state in future. In particular I want to consider how ‘the’ state has been imagined. Since ‘the’ state does not exist as a thing or a single organisation, it is perhaps as an imaginary that it is most commonly encountered as a unified whole. In everyday life we interact with a diverse, contradictory and ever-shifting collection of state institutions, actors and practices. However, rather like Benedict Anderson’s famous description of the nation, ‘the’ state is always imagined. While plural state practices enrol living (and dead) bodies, technologies, codes and objects in complex relations of connection and disconnection, ‘the’ state in the singular is an imaginary. State imaginaries have a long history and have taken a wide variety of forms, some of which are present in Johnston’s book. They include personifications, abstract ideals, machines, actors engaged in specific tasks, and expressions of particular qualities or attributes. Such diverse imaginings have divergent cultural and political effects; each helps to bring different kinds of politics and social relationships into being while inhibiting others. How the state is imagined thus matters for politics and political geography. State imaginaries influence how citizens, public officials, economic actors and movements and organisations in civil society understand the responsibilities, capacities, powers and affordances of state actors and institutions. The paper will draw on historical and contemporary examples primarily, though not exclusively, from Europe.
Towards a Multidimensional and Intersectional Research Agenda for Segregation Research?

Gemma Catney
Queen’s University Belfast, UK

Abstract

The late Professor Ron Johnston made significant contributions to the ways in which Geographers and other Social Scientists theorise, measure, and ultimately understand segregation. Johnston’s concerns with segregation mirrored his contributions to other areas of Geography, in particular his interest in spatial scale, and the causes and consequences of urban, social and population change. As a result, his research sought answers to difficult, important, and socially relevant questions. This paper begins with a potted review of Johnston’s transformative, and truly vast, volume of research on segregation. Concentrating mainly on the British context, the paper aims first to reflect on, document, and remember Johnston’s research on segregation by exploring several core themes that underpinned his work: the measurement and meaning of segregation; spatial scale and the local; neighbourhood classification, and the international comparative work that Johnston and colleagues’ scheme enabled. Building on this review, the rest of the paper explores an area of segregation research that distinguishes his (often collaborative) work from many others in the field, to offer a possible research agenda for scholars of segregation. Johnston’s concerns with the relationships between different ‘types’ of segregation (e.g., residential neighbourhoods, schools) and their ‘characteristics’ (e.g., by ethnicity/race, social class) have received comparatively little attention. This paper reflects on the opportunities offered by a more holistic approach to studies of segregation, particularly through adopting multidimensional and intersectional frameworks.
National affects: the everyday atmospheres of being political

Angharad Closs Stephens
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Abstract

Identity is widely acknowledged to be a felt experience, yet questions of atmosphere, mood and public sentiments are rarely made central to understanding the global politics of nationalism. This presentation based on a new book, National Affects (Bloomsbury, September 2022) asks what difference it makes when we address national identity as principally an affective force? National Affects traces how ideas about ‘us and them’ take form in ordinary spaces, in ways that are both deeply felt and hardly noticeable, in studies of global events that range from the London 2012 Olympic Games to responses to acts of terror, the European refugee crisis and ‘Brexit’.

The presentation will address the affective dimensions of being together to open new angles in the study of nationalism and global politics. It will ask how the nation is felt in everyday life, as well as differently experienced, and investigates different forms of enacting being together to generate new insights in the study of national identity. It will draw on academic theories in the study of Politics, International Relations and Human Geography, as well as stories, performance works and novels, to establish a new tone of critical enquiry, argues that ideas about ‘us and them' are not as stable as they are often made to seem.

In its focus on everyday atmospheres, this presentation outlines other ways of imagining and practising being political together and identifies new registers for intervening politically.
Dwelling and Démantèlement: Encampments as liminal spaces of the carceral city.

Melora Koepke
Simon Fraser University, Canada

Abstract

This paper explores a long-overlooked question in housing and social research on urban encampments in cities of the Global North: Why do they persist despite and beyond State “emergency shelter” services? Drawing from abolitionist geographies that posit “freedom as a place” (Gilmore, 2007), I explore how encampments installed in the urban interstices by those designated as “undesirable” (Agier, 2008; Koepke & Noûs, 2020) exceed their function as provisional dwellings to become spaces of movement, inhabitation and possibility for people caught in the crosshairs of multiple intersecting urban crises. Using examples from ethnographic research with migrants’ and drug users’ liberation groups in two “Olympic cities” of the Global North, I consider how provisional encampments in Paris, France and in Vancouver, Canada are “liminal prax(es)s of the many” (Lancione & Simone, 2021) that persist and proliferate beyond municipal-technocratic efforts to contain and remove them. Working with themes of freedom and fugitivity as offered by recent Black-geographic renderings of constrained spaces as well as the lived experiences of research interlocutors, I trace the political and pragmatic purposes of encampment and their capacities to resist the violence of the permanent temporary and forge hopeful futurities amidst the daily labour of survival in the ruins. I also examine the dualism of provisional dwelling and démantèlement: a French term akin to “camp sweeps” in English that I theorize as the political technology of banishment that constitutes the carceral city and ratifies régimes of racialized dispossession at multiple scales.

REFERENCES


Cool borders: activism, hedonism and the ‘imagineering’ of surf-centred initiatives for coastal preservation and protection

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Abstract

Surfing is heterogenous, political, and its popularity and mobility has ensured that it is now commonplace in littoral zones all over the world. Coastal surfing spaces are often heavily contested, with finite wave resources being stretched by both increased numbers of water users (including surfers), and external pressures such as, for example, development, degradation, or pollution. This paper looks to the reactions and actions of some surfers who have mobilised in response to these threats against surfing space and cultures. Drawing on extensive ethnographic and interview data, it is argued that the ‘enviro-surf community’, a group made up of actors who hold both a connection to surfing, and a will to enhance the environment in which surfing can take place, have ‘imagineered’ (after Routledge et al., 2007) solutions for the preservation and protection of the surfing environment and experience as they see it. This process is exemplified through the example of World Surfing Reserves (WSRs), an initiative managed by Californian NGO Save the Waves and supported by the broader enviro-surf community, and now in place in eight countries. Through WSRs, this paper explores the processes, problems and possibilities surrounding the creation and implementation of largely symbolic borders to reserve and preserve surfing space. In so doing, it suggests that the strategies forwarded and the victories sought are reflective of a new measure of ‘stoke’, and this quasi-hedonistic approach gives rise to questions around the ongoing domination of the white male and the associated exclusivity that has been present in surfing’s modern history.
Ron Johnston’s geography and Ron Johnston the geographer

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Abstract

This contribution will focus on Ron Johnston’s contributions and development as a historian and philosopher of the discipline. The point of departure is Ron’s recurring doubt about “Geography and Geographers” as valid approach to tie the discipline together. This doubt, set out in the preface to the last, co-authored, seventh edition (Johnston and Sidaway, 2016) ultimately led him to proclaim that the book was “dying” in one of his last publications (Johnston, 2020). Ron’s largest concern on this dimension of his work was about the diversity of and fragmentation in the discipline both defied straightforward representation and increasingly led to self-referential siloes. Ron’s early endeavours in the discipline were all about finding and forging connections (The Geography and the Urban Environment book series, his editorial work for Progress in Human Geography, Geography and Geographers, The Future of Geography, A Question of Place) and in several instances this search for connections led him to revise his earlier positions on foundational epistemological dimensions. In the last twenty years, he became sceptical about the possibility of dialogue. His own historical work became increasingly focused on salvaging moments and figures from the history of geography endangered by oblivion. He left us a rich trail of items he thought needed to be included in a history of the discipline, but felt less and less able to achieve this synthesis himself. This chapter will reflect on what Ron trajectory as a historian of the discipline and the history of the discipline he made himself (both as observer and participant) tells us about the futures of geography’s historiography. It seems that Geography and Geographers has died with Ron. How would he have wanted its offspring to look?
Conceptualising Afro-Ecuadorian Women’s Heritage as Resistance and Re-existencia

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Abstract

In this paper, we critically consider how celebrating and recognising Afro-Ecuadorian women's memories, everyday practices, and experiences, can act as an important counterpoint to narratives of loss and victimhood for Afro-Ecuadorian women living in a context of discrimination, violence, large scale resource extraction, and the destruction of their natural environment, in Esmeraldas, Ecuador. We critically analyse how heritage might be harnessed as a form of resistance, in order to contribute to the wider decolonial project of re-existencia. In particular, we explore how ideas of heritage may contribute to visibilising and making tangible the intimate connections between collective memory, territory and identity, and support the intergenerational transmission of these over time. The paper explores the context-specific ways in which heritage can be conceptualised in Esmeraldas, and considers the particular challenges of engaging with notions of heritage without exoticising, folkloricising, or ‘freezing’ our research partners and participants in time and space. We draw on ongoing research in partnership with an Afro-Ecuadorian community arts organisation, Mujeres de Asfalto, exploring the potential that oral histories present to co-produce, value, make visible, and make sense of, diverse forms of ‘heritage’.
Decolonial openings of Ron Johnston’s legacy: how to avoid new amnesias

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Abstract

Discussing the various editions of a key book such as Geography and Geographers: Anglo–American human geography since 1945, Ron Johnston offered remarkable examples of self-reflectivity. Stimulated by critics who stressed the need to include plural views on the increasingly complex and multifaceted field of geography including feminism, gender studies, race studies, postcolonialism and decoloniality, Johnston fully recognized the urgency of a collective engagement to write ‘different stories’ from the ‘margins’ of the discipline, considering those that are told from other standpoints than the Anglo-American ones. Johnston was aware that we are never writing ‘the history’ of geography, but only ‘a history’. Starting from this awareness, I discuss the decolonial openings that Johnston’s intellectual legacy can inspire. Drawing upon decolonial ideas of wider inclusion in the discipline and starting from Geography and Geographers, as well as from selected examples outside the Anglosphere, I provide some theoretical and methodological insights for writing new global, plural, cosmopolitan and multilingual histories of geography by (re)discovering neglected people, ideas, places and moments in this field of study.

While this implies challenging Anglo-American centralities and performing an actual multilingual and transnational turn in geographical scholarship, an important part of this task is the inclusion of sources such as archives of ‘marginalia’, ‘grey materials’ and personal memories whose employ Johnston deemed necessary in doing historical and theoretical work on what geography was, is and should be. Enlarging the cultural, linguistic, transnational and methodological scope of geographical histories means at the same time being faithful to the legacy of a curious person, open to all kinds of intellectual stimulations as Johnston was, and prefigurating new geographies ‘whose centre should be everywhere and the periphery nowhere’, as claimed by Elisée Reclus some 150 years ago.
Mapping the Emergence of a Northern System of Hydrogen Provision in Teesside

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Abstract

‘Left’ and ‘behind’ are two words that have recently been used together to frame the fate that has befallen many post-industrial towns in Northern England. Whether they remain ‘left’ is a political puzzle being played out in public as local and national, old and new political economies wrestle with the challenges of deep decarbonisation and post-pandemic recovery. That they remain ‘behind’ however, is an empirical reality, at least in terms of the life chances of residents. Teesside is one such place and is the focus of this paper because it is where a system of hydrogen provision and consumption is most likely to emerge in the UK which promises to enable the area to ‘level up’ with other more prosperous areas. Hydrogen has been missing from most visions of energy system transition and regional economic development until very recently but now appears as an important new aspect of how the area’s innovation and resource provisioning systems are being imagined. The paper aims to identify and chart the processes, agents, relations, material cultures and structures shaping the emergence of a northern system of hydrogen provision centered in Teesside.
New Spaces for Participation: Making a Virtue of the Digital

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Abstract

This paper explains how Covid-19 led to the evolution of my geographical practice. My research explores everyday feelings (Highmore, 2011) from the past, such as relationships with streets and neighbourhoods in the 1960s and 1970s, and how this influences relationships with public and private space within the ageing population.

The methodology involves producing biographical interviews into participatory walking tours (Evans & Jones, 2011) and drawing further meaning from the material in collaboration with performance artists. Though outdoor walks are less compromised by Covid-19 restrictions, the pandemic posed severe limits on undertaking face-to-face interviews (Hall, Gaved & Sargent, 2021). However, such conversations lend themselves to digital walks of the mind through platforms such as Zoom because participants take inspiration by sharing photos, maps, and other media.

Following an Open-Source pilot project in 2021, I gained ethical consent from Swansea University to conduct and record digital walks through Zoom. The digital material can be edited and shared in ways that are not possible with conventional interviews. For example, working through Zoom with Tin Shed Theatre in Newport, Wales, and their community-focused Public Theatre Company on a deliberative approach (Willis & al, 2021) to develop new material. We then work with performance artists to create film and prepare for a new public walking tour scheduled for later in 2022.

In conclusion, I aim to show that gathering and recording spatially-led oral histories through a digital video platform, instead of in-person, has transformative potential for public participation in co-producing research and enhancing impact.

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Changing tides: coastal rural imaginaries of slow violence

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Abstract

Neal et al. (2020) asserts that the image of 'the rural' as a timeless, problem-free space maintains a “particular tenacity and stickiness” (176). However, experiences of poverty and social exclusion are frequently invisibilised under these socially and culturally homogenous rural idyll fantasies (Agarwal et al., 2018; McDowell and Thompson, 2020; Neal, 2020; Shucksmith, 2016; Smith, 2012; Wenham, 2020). An example of this can be observed in how coastal imaginaries in Berwick-upon-Tweed are embedded with the enduring impacts of the deindustrialization of Berwick-upon-Tweed's fishing industry on a local level but are often obscured in national policy agendas. Specifically, following the loss of this industry, top-down rejuvenation strategies have focused on transforming Berwick from a fishing village into a coastal tourist destination that emphasizes its border-location and history. However, despite the shift towards tourism, the coastal imaginaries informed by the lost fishing industry still hold cultural and political significance in Berwick as native fishing communities in the area still advocate for its revitalization rather than memorialization. As argued by Walsh (2020), “attention to landscape temporalities implies a concern for how socio-natural changes in the landscape are perceived, experienced and framed” (3). Thus, through the lens of 'slow violence,' this article examines the tensions and fractures embedded in these fishing communities’ coastal imaginaries and analyzes the role they play in place-based identity and solidarity formation. Likewise, this work also considers how these imaginaries can be mobilized to sustain intersectional forms of solidarity, identity, pride, and collectivity in post-Brexit Britain.
Actors, Factors and Attractors: Social systems mapping in the London Borough of Lambeth

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Abstract

We present findings from participatory mapping research undertaken with black and minoritised communities in the London Borough of Lambeth. The work was commissioned by Ubele, the African diaspora organisation as part of Black on Track a public health and community development project with an overarching aim to support and progress the life chances and opportunities of participants. And to address deeper, systemic change needed to remedy the barriers that are limiting the opportunities, prosperity and well-being of citizens in the target communities. As a basis for the research design, we brought together two very different methodologies in what we believe to be an original and innovative way. Firstly, we identified the needs of participants using Storytelling to capture the barriers and challenges of their lived experience, an approach that has shown how shared stories can bring impetus to communities to help identify what they seek to change and can be effectively implemented in community partnership projects. Importantly it also enables previously unheard authentic voices to be carried to other stakeholders in the social ecosystem (Copeland & De Moor 2018). Secondly, Network Mapping using Graph Commons software visualised the ecosystem of support groups and resources in the area. The two data sets then formed the basis of a composite map connecting personal needs to pathways to support organisations, information and community assets. The mapping outcomes were then “gamified” and made available for stakeholder workshops in the form of a “Dominoes” game. The mapping and game process have great potential as tools to tackle other “wicked” problems.
Struggles for freedom in 19th century Rio de Janeiro
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Abstract

Historical documentation reflects the mentalities and intentions of those individuals and institutions that produced them. In slavery studies, this implicates dealing with great limitations because of the absence of voices from the black population about their own processes of enslavement and emancipation. In Brazil, emblematically, this fact led some authors to separate abolitionist movement from black revolts: while the first receives the status of an organized movement, associated with actions led by the white literate elite, the second boils down to isolated acts of rebellion by the enslaved population. However, from the 1980s onwards there was a reformulation movement in Brazilian historiography, which began to revisit old perspectives and records, and to adopt new research sources to rethink the relations between the dominants and the dominated. Therefore, this paper aims to identify black struggles and resistances in the 19th century Rio de Janeiro as a part of a broader scenario in the city that led to the abolition of slavery. To achieve this goal the research investigates documents produced, among other intentions, to control and repress the bodies and practices of the enslaved population, such as local legislation (Códigos de Posturas Municipais), police records (Galeria dos Condenados and Casa de Detenção da Corte) and newspapers (Jornal do Commercio). Rio de Janeiro was the imperial capital and one of the most important landing ports for enslaved Africans in the Americas, which represented a massive black presence in the city. For this reason, through the building of black enslaved narratives of their everyday struggles, it is expected to show the city of Rio de Janeiro as a scenario pro abolition.
From carbon democracy to climate democracies: Profligate utterances and contested visions of democracy at COP26

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Abstract

During COP26 utterances of democracy were numerous, but rarely did they follow the word ‘carbon’. ‘Real’ democracy, instead, was put forward as a challenge to carbon democracy. However, in spaces throughout the city ‘democracy’ had a variety of meanings and its evocation did different types of work. Some evocations offered a legitimate challenge to the world built around fossil energy whilst others reproduced it. While visions of climate democracy are gaining traction, existing research has yet to explore how these varying conceptions interact.

This paper illuminates the interactions between competing visions and practices of democracy using thematic analysis of field notes, images, articles and transcripts from COP26. These interactions are important to interrogate because democracy is often evoked to address deficiencies within dominant governance regimes, which are too disconnected from peoples’ lives to drive transition fairly. Through analysing evocations of democracy in climate spaces, this paper shows how the direction of transition, who governs it, and who owns it is deeply contested, which has serious implications for its ability to combat climate change.

This paper addresses this session’s key questions: What do these transitions look like on the ground? What futures do they draw us towards? Utterances of democracy tell us about the experience of transition through the everyday practices of the people who make them. Desired futures are also articulated through utterances of democracy, both when their work is prefigurative, and when they draw attention to hope. Climate democracies seek to enable our recovery from carbon democracy; are they up for the challenge?
Regional Inequalities: Evidence from Chile

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Abstract

The objective of this research proposal is to determine if regional differences in per capita income in Chile can be explained by the scope of Economy, Geography or Institutional approach. Considering the theoretical framework and the Chilean context of recent decades, the elimination of restrictions on international trade, the opening of the Chilean economy together with significant regions inequalities, it would be interesting to combine Economic, geography and Institutional approach field suggested by literature to contribute the explanations on the regional difference from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Literature on regional inequality has been traditionally focused on the regional economy context with origins in the theory of trade theory. Recently, New Economic Geography models emphasize the interaction among increasing returns to scale, transport costs and market size in a context of monopolistic competition; they predict the agglomeration of economic activities in the territory. In addition, Institutional approach, with New Institutionalism, which has the main premise that “institutions matter”, is interested in charting the impact of institutions on change measured over the time. Rodriguez (2017) argues that inequality is the most important obstacle to development; in this context, Chile is one of the most unequal countries in the region. Gonzalez (2020: 779) analyses the Chilean case - economic growth, high level of inequality as well social consent -and argues that it is necessary to “investigate Chile’s underlying institutions is key to understanding the profound roots of inequality”.

Evidence from empirical studies under a multidisciplinary perspective has been development mainly for European countries at national level. However, there is no evidence regard regional level (Rodriguez-Posse, 2020). In addition, evidence from empirical studies under a multidisciplinary perspective shows that the work done in the Latin American region is limited and virtually non-existent for the Chilean case. Thus, this research constitutes an original contribution from a multidisciplinary perspective.
Abstract

Water security (WS) combines with affordable and equitable sharing of benefits for both humans and ecology. The term water security combines with availability, accessibility, risk, and water management. Among these four fundamental elements of WS physical availability of water comes first that directs other elements. Dry land regions are being categorized as water scares that also undergoes with different degrees of land degradation and wasteland generation. This study considered Purulia district as the representative of a dry land region that has a prolonged history of regional drought, summer water crisis, and wasteland generation. Although the region receives an adequate amount of precipitation (average 1300 mm) still due to the geophysical set up the region is being considered as one of the dry areas in the country. The region is also being categorized as one of the underdeveloped/backward districts in the state and country. The dominance of the indigenous community not only represents a unique cultural contrast but the traditional society practicing some of the eco-friendly water management practices. This study aims to show the dynamic status of water resources along with the identification of wasteland and vegetation clusters in the district to understand the nature of water availability in the region. As WS is the combination of water and other allied resources in a particular setup. This study also tries to incorporate the regional constraints of water resource development in this dry land setup, simultaneously representing some of the traditional water harvesting methods in the region to attain a water-secure future in long run.
Addressing community-oriented approaches through meanings and processes: can they be a path to societal change?

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Abstract

Over the last decades, community-oriented approaches have been employed by the World Bank, European Commission and UN to foster local development worldwide. They encompass various concepts: CBD (Community-based development), CDD (Community-driven development), CED (Community Economic Development) and CLLD (Community-led local development) among others. Within Europe, their aim is improving territorial cohesion and resilience, while in the global south they have been mostly used in rather stressful post-conflict or post-disaster situations, or whenever governmental institutions are unable to provide essential services. These people-centred, bottom-up, place-based strategies emphasise community participation and/or control in planning decisions and allocation of resources.

Notwithstanding their emergence in literature and international agendas they have been mentioned interchangeably rendering ambiguous their very nature of practices and meanings, posing implementation and evaluation challenges, hindering their improvement. To clarify this theme, this article is organised in four sections: Firstly, a historical outline of community-oriented approaches. Secondly, their clear definition, highlighting main similarities and disparities. Thirdly, an analysis of key characteristics (geography; promoter; ethos, objectives; governance arrangement; leadership; outputs), illustrated by examples. Finally, a preliminary assessment on their risks and potentialities.

Arguably, beyond being an opportunity for communities to participate in decision-making processes, they deliver ‘soft’ outputs, inter alia, community capacitation, social capital building, social inclusion, resilience and on a hopeful note, societal change. This article is part of an on-going PhD research focused on CLLD (Community-Led Local Development) – the EU-led instrument designed to empower and capacitate communities so they can take part in the decision-making process of EU fund allocation.
Listen and Learn: Examining the Role of Schools Radio Broadcasting in Scotland’s Classrooms

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Abstract

In 1924, Garnetbank School in Glasgow trialled the first BBC radio broadcast to schools, transmitting a music lesson and a reading in French. This experimental broadcast launched the BBC’s decades long venture to produce radio programming for Scottish schools. Technological and infrastructural improvements were a priority amongst educational authorities who sought to secure good radio reception in schools across Scotland, even those in rural areas. Up until the 1990s, the BBC researched, produced, and transmitted radio broadcasts to classrooms, positioning the medium centrally in children’s primary and secondary education. Broadcasts were used to structure lessons about, and tell stories of, Scotland, using voices and sounds from across the nation. As young radio-listeners, school pupils were encouraged to understand Scotland’s past and present, and its place in the world, through differing subjects on the curriculum. This paper introduces my PhD inquiries into the role of schools broadcasting in shaping new social imaginaries, where radio directed pupils’ understanding of nationhood, citizenship, internationalism, and environmentalism. There is plentiful research on broadcasting histories in the UK, scholarship on the specifics of schools broadcasting is sparser, presenting opportunities to examine specific themes, such as the configuration of the classroom as a sonic space and new styles of pedagogy where children received instruction not only from their teacher but from a disembodied voice. My doctoral project is a collaborative partnership involving the National Library of Scotland and BBC Scotland, accessing archival sources (encompassing educational syllabi, printed pamphlets, radio scripts, instructional guidelines, and audio recordings) in both organisations. The paper will focus on the earliest years of BBC schools radio broadcasting, considering the role played by the Scottish Council for School Broadcasting in promoting this educational initiative, and efforts to ensure that new broadcasting could be received as widely as possible across the country.
Imagining recovery from catastrophe: a relational perspective on land transformations at the Skagen Spit coastline, Denmark

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Abstract

Skagen Spit located in Northern Denmark is the world’s largest sand spit formation, wrought by the intersection of two dramatic coastlines. It was formed during the past 7000 years as a result of marine deposition of beach ridges, glacial rebound and aeolian sand deposition. Through these processes a fertile highly heterogeneous landscape, patterned by swales and ridges was created, which was transformed into rangeland and agricultural fields. During the late medieval period, the area was afflicted by environmental catastrophe. Overgrazing, land use intensification and climatic perturbations in combination led to widespread desertification. Sand moved by the wind covered more than half of the spit. Subsequently, local communities and later national agencies have cooperated to re-establish, recover and develop land use and settlement. This has been done through a balancing act intended to find practical compromises negotiating coastal imaginaries of destruction and ecological thresholds on the one hand and visionary imperatives for attractive and improved futures on the other. We here provide a timeline of land transformations at Skagen Spit since the early 19th century and an overview of how these were understood and related to. On this basis we discuss how to best conceptualize and analyse land transformations, including how agency is constituted at the intersection of interacting land use patterns, coastal imaginaries and geomorphological processes. We conclude by outlining a relational analysis approach which may contribute to improving understandings of historical and ongoing transformations of Skagen Spit and similar areas.
Collaborative studentships - how to manage embedded doctoral research projects utilising participatory methods

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Abstract

The Economic and Social Research Council has been promoting collaborative PhD studentships that involve partnerships between postgraduate students and non-academic organisations. This has provided an opportunity to create doctoral research projects based on sustained participatory methods and action research linked with civil society organisations advocating for social transformation. In this paper, I offer insights into such arrangements based on the experiences of my collaborative PhD research. The project entailed a three year long participant observation of the East End Trades Guild – an alliance of over 400 small businesses in East London. During this time, I investigated how workspace struggles can challenge rising commercial rents and commercial gentrification at different scales of power in London, including commercial property owners and managers, Local Authorities, Greater London Authority, and the central government. Switching between the roles of an activist, an organiser, a researcher and an observer, the PhD project required me to constantly negotiate and rework my relationship with the partner organisation. Embedded research can improve the ethnographic method through overcoming the researching subject - researched object binary. However, it also carries risks around diminishing researcher autonomy and the researcher facing unmanageable expectations of delivering work for the partner organisation. As the researcher ‘enters into the field’ from day one, collaboration can turn into co-optation if checks and balances are not put in place. This paper highlights the risks that come with collaborative studentships and offers practical guidance for doctoral students and their supervisors on how to manage embedded doctoral research projects.
Living within the truth - climate change, COVID recovery, and community empowerment: transport geography's contribution and proposed future directions

Kate Pangbourne
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Abstract

In this lecture, I will reflect on the central contribution to be made by transport geographers in driving forward knowledge and insight into addressing low carbon futures whilst recovering from the pandemic and, to use the UK government’s bland phrase, ‘levelling up’. The evidence of substantial spatial variation in capacity, opportunity and outcomes in relation to all of these things is there, but often obscured by undifferentiated averages. As geographers of transport, mobility and accessibility, we are ideally placed to do valuable and impactful work. However, I argue here that, although geographical work clearly exists on inequalities and on how the specifics of shifting to a low carbon way of life intimately involves addressing complex social practices, transport geography itself needs to develop a much more distinctive and central focus on achieving these things and supporting communities directly as well as engaging with policy shapers to insist that they live within the truth of climate change. I close by issuing a challenge to transport geographers and allies everywhere.
Who is the expert in the F/field? Changing relationships in rural participatory research

Jenny Knight
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Abstract

Tree planting for Natural Flood Management is a ‘wicked’ challenge, yet historically solutions have taken technocratic and teleological approaches. In a study that prioritised the importance of land managers lived experience and expertise, participatory methods enabled a critique of these traditional approaches as well as exploring the efficacy of a more democratic approach.

Placing farmers and land managers as ‘experts’ at the very start of the research changed the power relations between participants and myself as the researcher. This had direct implications for the way in which the research was conducted. Recognising land managers as experts in their F/fields affected not only the conversations between myself and the participants but directly impacted both the data collection and modelling processes I subsequently used to evaluate the potential impacts of increasing tree cover in the catchment.

This allocation of expertise was not, however, static. In the early stages I, as the researcher, was ‘geographically ignorant’ of the place and individual farms (and in many ways still am!). As time went on however, I developed a wider, different knowledge of the ‘place’ and discovered that I was not the only one determining the role of ‘expert’. Both the place of the evaluation workshops (online as opposed to on-site) and participants perceptions of me and my knowledge, changed the relationship and thus the type of conversations. This presentation discusses the fluctuating nature of ‘expert’ and asks whether we sufficiently recognise the agencies (including non-human) that change it, and how this may impact both research and policy.
Decolonising forest policies in Northeast India

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Abstract

My current PhD study encompasses historical and contemporary analysis of forest policies in Northeast India with the objective of decolonising forest policies in the region. The analytical period of colonial forest policies in Northeast India stretches from the year 1874 to the present day, with special emphasis on the contemporary forest regulation such as Timber Ban of 1996 and Forest Rights Act 2006. Given the context, with the motive of decolonising forest policies in Northeast India, this study approaches the ‘decolonial’ by prioritising the indigenous ways of interpretation and comprehension about their land, forests and policies. Acknowledging that indigeneity is contested in the Indian context, the concept of indigeneity by Shaw et al is incorporated in this study, that perceives indigeneity as having ancestral and spiritual ties to their land. Foucault’s concept of governmentality has been adopted to present historical examples of forest governmentality traversing across identity construction and indigenous power structures. The study seeks to draw upon historical examples of forest regulation and their explicit resistance and resilient forest lifestyles as means to explore how forest dwellers were always decolonising forest policies.
White Cliffs Country: bordering and exclusion at the Kent coast

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Abstract

Representations of the British coast have always been important in sustaining the myth of the ‘island-nation’. Often taken-for-granted, such representation became highly-charged in the run-up to Brexit, deployed to support the Leave campaign. Here, it was the Kent coast, facing continental Europe, that was to the fore: since Brexit, images of refugees on Kent beaches, lorries queued on the motorways leading to the Channel ports and the white cliffs of Dover crumbling into the sea have all been used to support ideas that severing ties with the EU was the best – or worst – thing the UK has ever done.

In this paper, I draw on my work on Kent’s iconic coastline (Hubbard, 2022) to explore the way that imaginations of the coast have been used to support the idea of ‘islandness’ and the positive connotations of isolationism. Here, I stress that the Kent coast has been represented as the military ‘frontline’ at many points in British history, suggesting this discourse has informed recent representations of asylum seekers arriving in Kent as a de facto ‘invasion’ from overseas. However, I also note the existence of radical, inclusive and cosmopolitan representations of nationalism at the Kent coast, suggesting that such imaginings usefully help shift our focus from fears of migrant Others to tackling the existential threats of climate change and sea level rise which should be the most urgent priority for those living at the edge of England.
Too quiet or Too noisy: Cross-cultural perceptions and experiences of sound and aesthetics at the Angkor World Heritage Area

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Abstract

Conserving the collective memories of heritage places has been preoccupied with telling stories through the temporal layering of buildings, people, and environment: being able to stand, see and touch where something happened as a way of knowing. Critiques of cultural heritage management practices often focus on the visual elements of landscapes, seeming to control the things visitors see. But the richness of place is multi-sensory: not only do we ‘see’ heritage, but we also hear, smell and feel it. This paper counters the visual narrative by presenting alternative sensory mappings of the Angkor World Heritage Area. Utilising exploratory aural mapping, this paper investigates how multidimensional soundscapes are influenced by and influence visitor experiences and management practices. Whether it is stony silence or a cacophonic tapestry, sound washes over and through us, pulling us in and out of memories and moments, helping and hindering our relationship with heritage places. As a site of significant international heritage tourism, the sounds of Angkor are complex and contested. Aural interactions between people and place are entangled in emotional responses to Angkor: appreciated and despised; maintained and destroyed. The paper highlights the diversity of cross-cultural perception and experiences of sound and aesthetics, and the problematic clashes of interpretation that might arise at sites of international tourism.
An island once again: aesthetics, borders and race in the English Channel

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Abstract

Since November 2018, the so-called ‘Channel migrant crossings’ have been constructed as a spectacle of militarised maritime policing, as the British state is continually seeking to present itself to be ‘taking back control’. The accompanying political and media discourses have produced an assemblage of images and narratives, mobilising an imagination of insularity closely linked to registers of whiteness, sovereignty and racialised invasion anxieties.

In this paper, I explore these racialised aesthetics of the British sea-border, both in their contemporary form and in their development over the past two centuries. By tracing the historical production of the British island imaginary, I argue that the state and media response to the ‘Channel migrant crossings’ is the latest iteration of a historical imagination of the UK coastline. Consequentially, the racialised aesthetics of the (imagined) sea-border not only serve to legitimate militarised bordering practices, but also co-constitute the border itself, as the sea-border does not exist independently of its representations. The policing/representation of the sea-border thus also leads to a ‘bordering and ordering’ of subjectivities on both sides of the border, as the aesthetics of the coastline not only racialize migrants but also project inwards and contribute to an imagination of a ‘white’ Britain.
Modelling the unquantifiable: participatory arts-based approaches to UK climate change risk research

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Abstract

There is an increasing urgency for policy makers and the public to take meaningful action to reduce vulnerability to climate hazards. As noted in the latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, while mitigation of climate change has rightfully received attention in recent years, adaptation planning for a changing climate has lagged behind. As the impacts of extreme events become more acute and economic budgets are stretched, it is increasingly important that decision making about climate change adaptation plans are evidence based and effectively targeted. However, in the UK, there is a disconnect between relatively well quantified information on the nature of climate and weather events and the actual socio-economic impacts of these events. In some cases, quantitative data on impacts could have been collected in the past but was not, meaning there is no baseline to work from. In other cases, the impacts of interest are so subjective in nature (e.g. thermal discomfort) that any attempt to quantify them in a traditional generalised scientific modelling framework risks becoming meaningless. In certain cases, it must be accepted that quantified scientific modelling alone, for all its claims of objectivity, is insufficient to make decisions. It is here that participatory arts-based research methods can add huge value in the field of climate risk research, offering insights on these unquantifiable (but still very much important) elements of risk. Examples and results from two recent projects, “Temperature Life Stories” (2021, funded by Briggstow Institute, University of Bristol) and “Once Upon a Time in a Heatwave” (2022, funded by UK Climate Resilience Programme/NERC and Research England) will be presented, that used poetry and storytelling in small group settings in Bristol and Northern Ireland to directly compare personal perspectives, memories and experiences with scientific datasets.
Supporting and extending student field experiences with virtual reality: the ‘More Inclusive Fieldwork’ project

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Abstract

Fieldwork is a defining characteristic of most taught programmes in geography and allied disciplines. However, there is a growing realisation that traditional approaches can exacerbate broader equity, diversity, and inclusivity issues within these subject areas. Strategies for making fieldwork more accessible and inclusive have been proposed by various workers. Unfortunately, the potential of virtual fieldwork to support EDI initiatives by supporting (not replacing) in-person fieldwork has been overlooked. This project presents the progress to date on the ‘More Inclusive Fieldwork’ project, a NERC-funded initiative that explores how virtual fieldwork can be used to make in-person field experiences more inclusive. In addition to the pedagogic element, this project provides the academic community with the following resources: i) a tool for creating virtual field trips; ii) mechanisms to support networking and collaboration for the sustainable development of these resources; and iii) free virtual field trips
'This is Our House': Radical Care Work, Critical Pedagogy, and the Making of Autonomous Spaces in West Berlin, 1965-1977

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Abstract

This paper re-traces the history of housing struggles in West Berlin as a history of radical care work. It focuses, in particular, on the relationship between care work, inhabitation and the making of an alternative urban imagination. In so doing, the paper proposes a new reading of the communal spaces and autonomous youth projects that first flourished in West Berlin in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Drawing on extensive archival research, the paper connects the everyday spatial practices of squatters and other housing activists in the city to matters of care that politicised health and were intimately intertwined with a wider struggle over the meaning of political action, community organisation and collective city living. Taken together, these orientations aimed to make visible the actual physical sites - the radical urban infrastructure - in which alternative (and undeniably intersectional) forms of care and solidarity were actually assembled and developed from clinics to communes, squats to youth centres. At stake here, is the recognition of a largely neglected archive of care that encompasses struggles over housing, migrant rights, social welfare and urban redevelopment while opening up a critical space to imagine and conceive of inhabitation as practiced through everyday geographies care, dwelling and refuge.
New Paradigms of Military Geography: Environmental Impact of Modern Technicised Armed Conflicts | Emile Mardacany, CEng, FRGS, IET - © 2022 Emile Mardacany | emile@resology.eu

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Abstract

The military operations on land, in sea and air during the WWII in European and Pacific theatres of war with its devastating natural and built environment impact, the first time in human history raised the question of environmental protection during the armed conflict.

Responding to this new military paradigm, The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and its Additional Protocol I Articles 35 and 55 stated the requirements for protection against “widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment”, and that “attacks against the natural environment by way of reprisals are prohibited”.

In spite of internationally accepted Additional Protocol I articles, they were universally neglected as confirmed by environmentally aggressive military operation in post-WWII, Cold War, and in its “hot” armed conflicts of 20th century, which were continued in military interventions of 21st century at a global level.

At the same time, modern military warfare development achieved highest physical destructive and environmental impact, and military personnel and civilian lethality during and post-combat operations causing cumulative pollution and contamination by nuclear, bio-chemical and explosive weapons in use.

Military geographic science and technology new paradigms dramatically augmented effectiveness of combat precision strikes based on military geographical information system (GIS), local and global tactical digital charts, global space surveillance and remote sensing, operational area dynamic mapping and GPS weapon’s guiding.

It is also supporting strategic theatre operations using advanced systems such as command control and intelligence C2I, tactical C2ISR – C2I plus surveillance and reconnaissance, C2ISTAR – C2 plus ISTAR (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance) based on Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS), Electronic Navigation Chart (ENC), and most importantly interoperability between command and control and communication systems.

Global military operations controlling remotely combat unmanned air and land vehicle may lead to geospatial disorientation affecting military personnel’s psychology as distancing attacking force / weapon from defending force / target, separating them geographically as different attack and target geographic locations, turning real combat into a virtual target acquisition with its illusion of guiltless war conduct, i.e., a paradigm of false combat impartiality and martial immunity, leading to psychiatric conditions affecting military UAV & ULV operators.
Leading out with digital walking guides: some reflections from an alternative human geographies field course

Dan Swanton
University of Edinburgh, UK

Abstract

In this talk I reflect on making and using virtual walking guides on an alternative field course. The course adapted the design and pedagogy of human geography field courses to offer students opportunities for place-based experiential learning, group-work, and community building.

The course used digital walking guides for fieldwork walks that the students followed independently in small groups. The walking guides were designed to lead out (Ingold, 2018). Leading out in the field normally involves going along with students directing their attention and supporting them as they learn research methods and techniques, and design and do projects. Digital walking guides offered a way for leading out in the field, without being there. Our walking guides were designed to be downloaded onto a smartphone and use routes, audio recordings, soundscapes, videos, maps, comic strips, questions, and activities to direct attention and shape how the students’ responded to places, people, stories and ideas. The walks also got students away from screens, and connecting with each other in person, and encouraged peer-to-peer learning.

The presentation will share reflections on using digital walking guides, drawing on the experiences of both staff and students. It introduces how student co-creation was used in an assessment where the students make their own walking guides for their peers. It also considers how the blend of virtual and place-based learning in this course is shaping current teaching, and being used to reflect on concerns about the accessibility and inclusivity of field teaching.
Health and wellbeing in the aftermath of climate change adaptation

Catherine Butler
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

This first paper in the session explores existing literature for what it can reveal about the relations between adaptations to floods and health and wellbeing. Examining different types of flood adaptation (namely hard infrastructure, living-with-risk, and relocation), the paper develops a synthesis of studies to build insight into ways that health and wellbeing are likely to be impacted by these different strategies. The analysis is shaped around examination of processes and factors known to be important for wellbeing, such as place relations and security. It highlights how the relations between adaptation processes and health and wellbeing are likely to be far more varied than assumptions of universal benefit may suggest.
Who sees how we struggle? Ethnicity, violence, and the legibility of the margins

Shona Loong
University of Zurich, Switzerland

Abstract

This paper discusses why struggles at the state’s margins go unheard in the international arena. In as much as scholars conceive of margins as constituted by multi-scalar power relations, the international arena remains structured by a ‘colonial rationality’ (Jabri 2013), which renders certain voices, concepts, and actors illegible. In Myanmar, the February 2021 coup precipitated a countrywide conflict. Why, despite a great amount of international attention on Myanmar, do resistance actors struggle to be heard in the international arena? While political geographers have helpfully conceptualised the agency of marginal actors, I ask: whose agency matters, and why? In particular, I analyse two marginal actors’ efforts to contest the coup. The first is the Karen National Union (KNU); an ethnonationalist group that has fought the central government for seventy years. Ethnicity is central to the KNU’s worldview, actions, and demands. However, international actors consider ethnic affiliations as an obstacle to be overcome in the process of state-building. The second actor is the National Unity Government (NUG); the government-in-exile formed after the coup. In September 2021, the NUG declared its support for armed violence against the junta. Both civilians and armed groups welcomed the call; perceiving that the military could not be ousted by other means. However, international actors continued to call for “restraint” and the cessation of violence. Ultimately, the power relations that constitute the state’s margins remain illegible in the international arena, where actors’ habitus is rooted in postpolitical aspirations for global governance, thereby putting marginal actors in a bind.
Bringing the Field Online: An immersive mixed reality (MR) field trip to Pyrmont, Sydney

Cameron McAuliffe, Oznur Sahin, Keren Moran
Western Sydney University, Australia

Abstract

Field-based learning plays a central role in the geography discipline, with field trips providing opportunities for active learning through embodied experience. The possibilities for remote learning and other forms of mediated access afforded by new technologies, such as augmented (AR) and virtual reality (VR), present new opportunities, but also challenges, for the ways we think about field-based learning. This presentation will provide an overview of the Global City Processes field trip, which has been developed as a mixed reality (MR) field trip (with AR and VR elements) delivered in the Geography and Urban Studies and Planning undergraduate degree programs at Western Sydney University. The field trip, initially designed as a self-guided immersive in-situ experience in Pyrmont, a post-industrial inner suburb of Sydney, was flipped online in Autumn 2020 in response to the changed conditions brought on by the pandemic. In 2021 and 2022, the field trip has been delivered as a ‘HyFlex’ field trip with online and face-to-face cohorts. The paper will also report on the research project, Bringing the Field Online, investigating the impacts of the use of VR and AR on field-based learning and how these technologies might unsettle hermetic notions of ‘classroom’, ‘field site’, or ‘home’, supporting more relational framing of our contemporary learning environments. This has implications for the way we might critically frame the pedagogical value of ‘online field trips’, whilst recognising that where learning takes place matters.
**People Protected: Performing post-automobile citizenship**

Amelia Thorpe  
UNSW, Australia

**Abstract**

“If the city won’t protect us, we will protect our own.”

This paper examines People Protected bike lanes, a series of interventions in citizenship on city streets. Participants put their bodies on the line, quite literally, standing in traffic to temporarily create safer spaces for cycling. Over the past five years, the practice has spread from San Francisco to other US cities (New York, Portland) and to other countries (Mexico, Ireland, Germany). Their actions connect, often directly, to a wider range (and longer history) of activism intended to reorient streets away from automobility: the Urban Repair Squad in Toronto; Roadsworth in Montréal; Ted Dewan’s ‘folk traffic calming’ in the UK; Cykloguerilla in Bratislava; Ciclo Faixa in Brazil and Colectivo Camina in Mexico, to name just a few.

People protected bike lanes can be understood as ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin and Nielsen 2008), interventions deployed to (re)constitute the scope of citizenship rights. People protected bike lanes contribute not just to the material form of the city, but to the city-citizen relationships at the heart of urban governance (Aldred 2010).

My interest in these practices flows from ongoing work on public participation in city-making: who gets to have a say, and how. A central concern is the interaction between formal and informal planning systems, drawing on pluralism and performativity to highlight the contingent and socially constructed nature of the rules that structure the city (Thorpe 2020). In exploring participation and the entanglement of the formal and the informal, my emphasis is on strategies through which city-making might be pushed in more progressive directions. Drawing particularly on Davina Cooper’s work on prefigurative state formations (Cooper 2017; 2016), I am interested in whether people protected bike lanes might disrupt and reshape city-citizen relationships by acting as if they were different.
Exploring expert understanding: uncovering the meaning of health and wellbeing in the context of flood risk

Hannah Hayes
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Our final paper in this session critically explores how flood, climate and health professionals based in the UK, Ireland and Ghana understand health and wellbeing in relation to flood risk management. Transcripts of interviews with current professionals were analysed using a broadly theory-based codebook based on the dimensions of wellbeing conceptualised by White (2010). Our findings indicate that, largely, the professionals held a progressive, broad understanding emphasising the need for integration between professional sectors to manage impacts on physical health and mental health and wellbeing in relation to flood risk.
Growing an inclusive teaching environment

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\textsuperscript{1}University of Bangor, UK. \textsuperscript{2}University of York, UK. \textsuperscript{3}University of Salford, UK

Abstract

Despite the pivot to online learning and the emergence of digital tools and technologies in 2020, the effectiveness of these learning environments to address inclusivity and accessibility in environmental sciences has yet to be quantified. Equally, there are barriers to university staff adopting digital technologies in their teaching. Furthermore, it is not clear what alternative strategies and virtual learning environments will increase participation in environmental sciences to ensure an equitable, diverse and inclusive for all. Instead of ‘othering’ students in the context of fieldwork, what is needed is a paradigm shift from making adjustments to designing fieldwork for all and using digital technology to achieve that. CULTIVATE is a NERC-funded project that is examining how we can develop inclusive fieldwork practices and embed EDI firmly into our teaching through the adoption and development of digital technology and resources in order to grow that inclusive teaching environment. Throughout this project, we have been sharing our experiences, creating communities of practice, and developing best practices. We will be sharing our initial findings and outputs on our progress to date.
Babies, boats, and memory gaps: reflections on interviewing in the pandemic

Alice Oates
University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract

Every researcher working during the COVID-19 will have had their research plans affected to a greater or lesser extent. The effects of the pandemic may be personal, such as the loss of a loved one or a period of illness, or academic, such as being cut off from field sites or other crucial sources. And often the two categories combine, creating a tangle of challenges unique to each researcher. In this paper I will reflect on my personal experience of conducting my PhD research during 2020. With archives closed, I turned earlier than expected to in-depth interviews. These were heavily informed by oral history method, but looked very different to the ‘ideal’ oral history. Conducted entirely virtually, with all the disruptions inherent in home working, with a side dish of mental ill-health, these interviews none-the-less provided me with useful data at a time that all other avenues of research were closed to me. I ask if there is a case for changing our expectations for research methodologies, and for allowing our personal emotional experiences to bleed into our written research accounts.
Public land, value capture, and the rise of speculative urban governance in post-crisis London

Aretousa Bloom
Uppsala University, Sweden

Abstract

The local state is a key site through which the contradictions of neoliberal governance are mediated and through which different urban futures are imagined. In the case of London, one such contradiction can be observed in the expansion of a speculative, risk-orientated mode of governance organised around the extraction of financial value from public land, and the simultaneous privatisation and downsizing of local government as neoliberalism is contracting the space for the state to act. Drawing on local authorities’ debt-leveraged experiments in housing production in London, I explore how the local state navigates this contradiction and assess some of the emerging effects of this shift in governance. I examine in particular the ways in which permanent austerity reconfigures relations of risk across different institutional arms of the state, and how and with what effects, local authorities have become enmeshed in these new configurations in the process of financing the ownership and development of land and housing. Through interviews with state actors, consultants, and activists, I find that authorities have emerged out of this shifting landscape as relatively uncertain actors, exceeding binary identifications of either passive enablers of austerity or active speculators. I show how the local state’s attempt to capture and extract value from public land is a conflict-ridden process that is shaped by competing narratives over the role of land speculation in municipal politics, and by the internalization of the logic of financial viability. Finally, I argue that the emergence of this mode of state-led value capture ultimately works to heighten patterns of uneven development and to weaken local democratic governance.
Geo-historical investigation and heritage assessment by spatial analysis along medieval routes in Italy

Leonardo Porcelloni
University of Nottingham, UK

Abstract

This paper explores the research along a medieval route and the tangible heritage related to it. Starting from a geo-historical approach to investigate the landscape, the complexity of the medieval road network is presented in two Italian rural areas crossed by the via Francigena, an important communication and pilgrimage route that linked the populations of north-western Europe with Rome and the Holy Land. Today it is a Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (since 1994) and candidate for UNESCO World Heritage.

The Council of Europe is the main body responsible for promoting historical and cultural itineraries in Europe through the Cultural Routes programme launched in 1987. The process of reinventing historical routes and making them accessible determines significant challenges. For these purposes, while it is necessary to institute a single route, a detailed geo-historical study of the territory reveals a complex road network made up of parallel roads, internal connections and variants of the route, which are constantly changing according to an evolving hierarchical road system. This leads to the development of a design for interpreting the territory beyond the regional unit, thus concerning the analysis of roads: a shifting point of view that takes into account cultural flows and connections between the various settlement nodes.

Following the empirical research, which was conducted in the archives, in the field, and through spatial analysis with GIS tools, the results of the case studies will be examined in virtue of the heritage traceable to the flow of the medieval road system. It will be discussed the dynamic mapping through spatial analysis supported by a descriptive database. From a single exclusive path, we shift to an inclusive approach concerning the spatiality of the road that can also benefit other rural communities gravitating around the main itinerary.
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**Orthography and colonial place naming: questions of power, authority, and authenticity**

Beth Williamson
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

**Abstract**

This paper is about the colonial practice of inscribing order, identity, and meaning upon human landscapes through the process of place naming. I investigate how naming or renaming in the process of colonial expansion was a fundamental element in the pursuit of control over physical and social environments. Although certain colonial-era naming projects were attentive to orthography—to the conventions by which place names were pronounced and spelled—they typically only listened to the voices and perspectives of certain people, a fact that demonstrates how geographical landscapes are embedded within and represent particular relationships of power. In exploring these power relationships, I offer a summary of recent work that explores questions of authority and authenticity in place naming, before offering an empirical case study on how orthography was imagined, standardised, and applied at the Royal Geographical Society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I conclude by outlining the future scope for work in critical place naming studies, and histories of geography more broadly, and explain why historical geography and scholars in related fields should take orthography as a practice and political activity more seriously.
Neighborhood: places and communities in time of pandemics. Thematic Analysis

Tomasz Sowada
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected almost all areas of social and economic life. Its impact on the functioning of society is also noticeable on the microscale of the urban neighborhood. Mobility restrictions, which are one of the ways to counteract the spread of the pandemic, have significantly affected the spatial behavior of urban dwellers around the world. In many cases, our mobility was temporarily limited to the immediate vicinity of the place of residence, and all travel required justification. This fact could potentially affect the functioning of neighborhood communities, which was an incentive for me to undertake proper research.

During this presentation, I will present the results of research conducted in the form of in-depth interviews with leaders of neighborhood communities from two Polish cities: Poznań and Wrocław. Both are located in the west part of Poland, and their number of inhabitants is in the range of 500 - 650 thousand people. During the interviews, I discussed topics related to the functioning of local communities and neighborhood places during the pandemic. The collected material was transcribed, coded, and analyzed using thematic analysis. I was looking for answers to questions about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the functioning of urban neighborhoods.

I will present the research results focusing on the main threads identified as part of the inductive analytical procedure. They relate to integrating local communities, undertaking and conducting neighborhood collective actions, and functioning of neighborhood places during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research results indicate that the restrictions related to the pandemic state were both an obstacle and a factor in developing social relations and community collective actions.
Agroecological transitions in territorial food systems: the articulations between biophysical-innovation-market-knowledge arrangements and power configurations

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Abstract

There is an increasing acknowledgement of the territorial scale as an appropriate one to tackle sustainability transitions of food systems. However, two key dimensions of agrifood system transitions are still partially overlooked, or insufficiently articulated together: the role of specific socio-ecological settings and that of power relations. The issue of power relations has been increasingly debated, but is rarely related to the particular bio-physical distinctiveness of agrifood systems. This bio-physical distinctiveness relates both to the intrinsic characteristics of food production-consumption systems as opposed to other sectors (high variability and uncertainty due to their reliance on bio-physical processes) and to the specificities of some regional contexts in regard to others. How do bio-physical features interact with the other key components of the agrifood systems, i.e., knowledge, innovation, market, regulations and policies? We will suggest a biophysical-innovation-market-knowledge (BIMK) arrangement approach to characterize these interactions. How are power configurations redefined along the (re)design of these arrangements? How do the articulations between BIMK arrangements and power configurations allow to characterize agrifood systems trajectories and the transition mechanisms at play?

Our objective in this paper is to explore these questions by contrasting four regional trajectories (two in the UK and two in France), which will allow us to analyse the impact of different articulations of specific (contextualised) biophysical-innovation-market-knowledge arrangements and power configurations. This will finally lead us to demonstrate the layered nature of successive arrangements and the related articulations with successive power configurations.
Reflections on using engaged scholarship to research with local high streets

Chloe Steadman, Steve Millington
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Abstract

There are ongoing concerns around theory-practice gaps within academic research; however, there is a growing requirement for academics to carry out research which has a positive impact on society beyond the ‘ivory tower’. In this presentation, we draw on a long-term project undertaken with local high streets in Manchester, UK, to discuss the potential merits of using ‘engaged scholarship’ (Van de Ven, 2018) within academic research on place. Engaged scholarship is a participatory style of research in which academics collaborate with non-academic partners (e.g. practitioners, policy-makers and communities) throughout the research process to address society’s ‘wicked problems’ – that is, those complex issues difficult to tackle from a single perspective. Based on these first-hand experiences, we first outline some of the key benefits provided by engaged scholarship, such as building greater trust between academics and non-academic partners, providing more localised knowledge about the phenomenon of interest, and generating real-world impact, which we have written about in two impact case studies for REF2021. However, we will also discuss some of the challenges encountered, including differing local capacity for change, competing research partner timelines, and publication difficulties. We conclude by calling for the academy to be more supportive of engaged scholars.
Community Resilience and Digital Marketing in Informal Creative Industries of the Southern Cities: A Case of Kolkata’s Idol-crafting Community

Debapriya Chakrabarti
The University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic and the associated isolation have highlighted the need for social and cultural integration to support everyday practices and livelihoods in disadvantaged communities in Indian cities where disjointed infrastructure and stretched services are common. Kolkata’s Kumartuli neighbourhood remains the densely populated centre of idol-crafting for Durga Puja, a Hindu festival that has been listed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. However, the regional lockdowns had affected the marketing and sales of the clay idols that are prepared in this crafting community in the informally built workshop residences of the neighbourhood for over six months annually. When the festival preparations reach their peak in the monsoon and early autumn, India was hit by waves of the pandemic precisely on two consecutive years disrupting the idol crafting and allied practices. The aim of this paper is to present the emerging digital spaces for marketing on social media apps considering the Covid-19 pandemic and how despite the loss of livelihoods and business the community has collectively combined their resources and continued to adapt to these new challenges. The paper presents the frugal yet effective digital marketing strategies within these informal realms, with a particular focus on popular *jugaad* (Indian word for flexible use of using limited resources for problem-solving) modes of adaptations, innovations, and creative techniques in post pandemic recovery. Studying the changing trends of marketing data from various social media platforms since the beginning of the pandemic, telephonic interviews and a deliberative workshop, this paper presents the findings that suggest adaptations, community resilience and targeted e-marketing strategies. This research highlights an inevitable shift from individual agency in using digital marketing techniques to collective forms of e-communications, activism and marketing in times of crises and recovery within informal sectors, where governmental and other forms of support remained limited.
(Re)locating Transitional Justice: Vancouver, a ‘City of Reconciliation’

Tiger Hills
University of Oxford, UK

Abstract

As a globalised peacebuilding paradigm, transitional justice seeks to provide accountability and redress for victims of systematic human rights abuses and is endorsed and promoted by interstate institutions like the United Nations (Teitel, 2005). Despite – and, indeed, because of – this globality, geographers and peace scholars have highlighted how the link between transitional justice and experiences of justice and peace on-the-ground is tenuous (Sriram, 2007; Sriram and Ross, 2007; Jung, 2009; Hughes, 2020). As such, there has been a move to relocate and rearticulate transitional justice into spaces and shapes seemingly more attune to the everyday experiences of victims (Inwood, Alderman and Barron, 2016).

The case of Vancouver, British Columbia, presents a unique case within this moment. Described as a City of Reconciliation, Vancouver city council adopted the principles of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2014, committing to implement the recommended ‘Calls to Action’ within the site of the city (City of Vancouver, 2022). The success of this in providing justice in the face of settler-colonial violence and creating peace in the city remains open and contested. Yet, literature on the city as a liminal political space indicates the potential of this rearticulation – as urban space is both constrained by and bought into (inter)national agendas and circuits of power, while simultaneously shaped by politically agent and creative populations (Darling, 2010; Ridgley, 2013; Anderson and Flynn, 2021).

In this context, this paper asks how these global dynamics are being rearticulated in the urban and what potential this may hold in the search for justice and peace.
Emergent territorial formations of food systems governance: the case of Yorkshire

Chris Yap
City University of London, UK

Abstract

Within the field of human geography, the past decade has seen a revaluation of the concept of territory. Broadly, ideas of “state-space” have been replaced by more networked, counter-hegemonic, and cosmopolitan notions of territory (Halvorsen, 2019; Trauger, 2014). This shift has drawn attention the significance of “emergent territorial formations” in governance processes (Sassen, 2013) such as global networks of local activists, which operate within and between nested jurisdictional territories and structures.

In the UK, food partnerships have emerged as consequential “spaces of deliberation” (Moragues-Faus, 2020) for food systems governance at the local level. Food partnerships take a diversity of forms, but are commonly constituted in urban areas, involve a range of actors from different sectors, and seek to address a range of issues in relation to food such as climate change, health and inequality (Lang et al., 2009).

This paper examines the role of food partnerships as an emergent territorial formation within the food systems governance landscape. Specifically, the paper draws on semi-structured qualitative interviews with seven food partnerships in the Yorkshire and Humber Region, to examine how diverse sets of actors mobilise to enact territorial food systems strategies.

In doing so this paper aims to make three contributions to discourse. The first is to contribute empirical evidence to the geographical literature on non-State centric conceptions of territory, focusing on the constitution of, and relations between, emergent territorial formations within and across unbounded food bioregions. The second is to reflect on the role of food partnerships in articulating (local) territorial food imaginaries. The third is to identify practical and strategic lessons for creating more integrated and inclusive food policy at the local level.
Radical Diaspora and Decolonising Jewish Land Justice

Rachel Solnick
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Abstract

Connecting to land and farming is generally considered incongruous with normative ideas of Jewishness unless situated in Jewish political nationalism, Zionism. Jewish people across the world for millennia experienced perpetual displacement, relocation, and restricted access to land. Simultaneously Jews with proximity to whiteness have participated in settler colonialisms. Radical Diasporism is a concept that fundamentally challenges colonial constructions of land, nation and belonging. This paper situates Radical Diasporism as an emergent feature of the multi-ethnic, multi-racial diasporic Jewish identities that have evolved across millennia. I argue that by disrupting possessive ideas of land, it offers the potential for co-liberation for victims of colonial land injustice across different traditions. This paper considers an alternative non-nationalist idea of land belonging by drawing on Yiddish ideas of doikayt (hereness), valuing the diversity of histories experienced in dispersion and resonating with an ancient word Jews used for themselves: Ivri or “border crosser”. Such ideas, I argue, challenge notions of authenticity predicated on cultural essentialism and instead proposes a commitment to a political essentialism, one that resonates with ideas of radical Blackness as a political concept that ties the ‘destiny of the diaspora together’ (Andrews 2018, 154).

Drawing on my archival and interview-based research into BIPOC/Jewish farmers in Detroit and across New York State, I argue that we need a more nuanced sense of diasporic thinking that can take account of migration, indigeneity, enslavement and settler-colonialisms, recognising that if we can negotiate these challenges then Diasporism offers a way of creating just land and food systems.
Against the grain: Networking and Collaborating to Out-Scale Territorial Grain Economies

Chris Maughan¹, Bálint Balázs², Giovanni Belletti³, Andrea Marescotti³, Matteo Mengoni³, Mikheil Pakatsoshvili⁴

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Abstract

Modern industrial grain systems are dangerously unsustainable. Despite being the most common production system in Europe, grain production is responsible for significant environmental and social costs while delivering meagre benefits to producers and publics alike. A growing movement of farmers, millers, and bakers from across Europe are beginning to find collaborative ways round these problems by creating territorially-situated networks to govern the distribution of genetically diverse, non-commodity focused, and agroecologically produced and processed grains. However, these emergent networks remain poorly understood, especially in terms of their use of novel governance structures, economic arrangements, and their scaling potential.

This paper draws on four case studies from across Europe aimed explicitly at the territorial governance and out-scaling of alternative grain economies. Following a literature review of the existing research on territorial grain economies, the analysis of the four case studies presented is based on a combination of stakeholder interviews, field notes, and economic analyses. Using a ‘social-ecological systems’ approach (Berkes et al. 2003), the paper outlines a series of common criteria for assessing the extent of democratic governance, as well as the economic, social and environmental resilience, of these emergent networks. In doing so, our analysis will seek to uncover the potential for similar initiatives to build scalable alternatives to the faltering industrial and globalised supply chains which dominate the contemporary agricultural landscape.
‘We are here because you were there’, the role of colonial circulations and imperial wars in understanding one’s marginalised position in France

Claske Dijkema
swisspeace/University of Basel, Switzerland

Abstract

My research challenges the representation of marginalised social housing neighbourhoods in France as ghettos that need to be opened up and civilized. It is stigmatizing discourse, reductive categories and financial reasons that confine inhabitants of marginalized neighbourhoods rather than the latter’s supposed traditions and foreign cultures. The decolonial approach to these marginalised spaces I developed in my PhD research opens up to a much larger and less hierarchical view of spatial connections beyond the nation-state. Instead of seeing a neighbourhood that is turned inwards, I see a population that is open to many different spaces, but that is not necessarily oriented towards the centre, be it the city centre or the national capital. I see a plurality of presences and cultural circulations, a form of “bottom-up globalization” (Tarrius 2010). I look at the role of colonial circulations and the more recent imperial wars through in the way inhabitants of such a marginalised neighbourhoods in Grenoble make sense of their position in France. My observations are empirically grounded in my action-research with the People’s University of Villeneuve. With a diverse team we inquired what is left of the colonial past according to the viewpoint of (mostly racialized) inhabitants. Migration is obviously an important theme: one participant typically explained: “we are here [in France] because you were there”. The oppression of Palestinians is another important theme, which serves as a mirror through which Arabs understand their marginalised position in France. These observations hopefully contribute to rethink the global from the vantage point of the state’s margins.
Reflections on impact and policy development: neighbourhoods, policy, and levelling up

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Abstract

Reflecting on the development of Neighbourhood Planning (NP) in England since its inception in 2011, this paper explores the promise of community-led planning for the UK’s levelling up programme, and the authors’ engagement with the government department responsible for NP over the past decade. Despite a range of reservations about Neighbourhood Planning – including issues raised by our own research – the policy is cited by the UK government as potentially important to the levelling up project. This highlights myriad (often difficult) questions about how neighbourhood level policy needs to change to help ameliorate place-based inequalities. We reflect on how the NP policy has been iterated over the past decade or so, and how this intersects with impact agendas within universities. We consider the role that the institutionalisation of impact has had on the research and the claims for impact, given the work has been the subject of successive impact case studies for two REF exercises. The paper provides a critical assessment of how NP can, or whether it should be expected to, address deeper social and environmental challenges that are suggested by the levelling up discourse.
Dystopian Geographies and Big Geospatial Data amidst COVID-19 Pandemic in Global South

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Abstract

The uncertain events in the spatio-temporal black swan conditions have always prompted communities to adapt in accordance with events happening. The structure and morphosis of the same events was altogether changed with the COVID-19 pandemic pervading across the world. The inherent dichotomy of cause-effect dichotomy was drastically changed. The policies, strategies and the planning strategies required for the immediate risk and disaster events was just out of the textbook techno-administrative response. This new age health disaster impelled for the state of art solutions supplemented by the precise and effective remedial solutions. Most of the countries from the global south attempted the tracking and predictive analytics strategies for breaking the chain of infection trajectory. From the works of Baudrillard and Agamben, the discourse of individual rights vis-a-vis the state action re-emerged amidst the dystopian geographies with the apparatus of strict control and discipline regime defining the mitigation strategy. The big geospatial data subsequently integrating the real time health data analytics largely aided in reducing the pervasive impact of peak COVID-19 phases in Global South. This study will attempt to dissect the dystopian discourse in the frame of ‘state of exception’ in the extraordinary situations which will cumulatively determine the action oriented approach of the governments in the disaster related risks.
(Overcoming) Obstacles to building a heritage grain production and supply system in the UK

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Abstract

Industrial grain production is unsustainable. It consumes vast amounts of fossil fuels that cause climate change, and toxic agrochemicals that destroy biodiversity above and within the soil. Farmers must grow vast amounts of grain to justify investments in equipment, handling and storage, and without subsidies commercial grain production in the UK is largely uneconomic. It also contributes very little to rural communities and the local economy. In contrast, agribusiness is thriving and makes vast profits from the sale of seeds and chemicals. Is it possible to build a new heritage grain economy using agroecological methods, which could supply a decentralised ‘grain chain’ that benefits consumers, growers, local communities and the environment? This paper will review some of the economic, political and agronomic challenges faced by heritage grain producers as well as the challenges of increasing heritage grain consumption in the UK. This is the first step towards a vision that biodiverse heritage grains, transformed into nutritious and accessible sourdough bread/foods for all would be at the centre of food systems transformation towards agroecology and food sovereignty.
Different roof, same sky? The political, social and affective effects of post-eviction on the lives of former squatters in Rome, Italy

Chiara Cacciotti
Polytechnic and University of Turin, Italy

Abstract

In this short intervention I will introduce my role in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. In particular, I will focus on the post-eviction phenomenon - namely on the social, affective and political effects that evictions have had (and still have) on the life of former squatters in Rome. With my current and ongoing research I'm interested in exploring, through some in-depth, open and semi-structured interviews, if people who used to join squatting movement still perform radical practices or if they stopped, together with if they have incorporated radical practices in their actual living and housing situation. The object of the research will be then to give answers to the following questions: what happens to their political agency once they stop living in squats? Are they still experiencing an embodiment of housing precarity or did they actually manage to find a permanent housing solution on their own? Are they still in touch with housing movement or are they still living in housing contexts where there is a constant negotiation of their domesticity’s thresholds, as it usually happens within squats? Are they still practicing radical housing praxis and activism, regardless of their individual current housing situation?
‘Do you know what’s underneath your feet?’: Social Constructions and Local Understanding & Expertise of the Underground in Proposed Shale Gas Sites in the UK

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Abstract

Resource extraction relies on human interaction with the underground. Yet, little research has explored localized, place-based relationships to the underground and subsequent concerns tied to proposed underground activity. This paper expands geopolitical literature by highlighting how the underground is socially constructed in two U.K. communities faced with proposed shale exploration. Using case study data, we uncover residents’ social constructions of the underground that are rooted in local, place-based sets of knowledge. These understandings of the underground shape resident concerns about drilling and create contestations around knowledge, evidence and expertise in relation to the proposed exploration. Concerns relate to several aspects of subterranean properties and processes, emphasizing the importance of thinking about space three-dimensionally, and particularly in terms of verticality, depth, volume and fluidity. Further, these place-based attachments and perceptions of the underground broaden our understanding of relationships between people and the underground and lead to important questions about evidence for decision-making and rights to the underground. As continued underground interventions will be an important component of net-zero strategies like geothermal energy and heat and carbon storage, understanding place-based community concerns around subsurface interventions will be crucial in informing decision-making processes in these endeavours.
Can a territorial product create a territorial food system? The pathway offered by the UK wine industry

Claire Lyons
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

The UK wine industry embodies many characteristics of a territorial food systems: it is one of the few industries witnessing a growth of small scale farms (under 5 acers), yields are managed for quality not quantity, expressions of terroir connect the product to place and nested, short food supply chains characterise the market. These, however, are indicators of territory and not necessarily enable the potentialities of a territorial food systems, especially one delivering a pathway beyond recovery. This paper will explore how a territorial product may revive and regenerate environmental resources and place-based farming communities, but also consider the ways it could distract and detract from a fundamental redesign of the food system. A specific focus will be on the people drawn to the UK wine industry and how they enact territory, by example do successful winemakers share their platform with their non-vinous neighbours or use their power to shape a region in their image? This paper will thus look beyond the facile markers of territory to consider the fundamental mechanisms of a territorial food systems and examine the components required to build a pathway beyond recovery.
Governmentality and Urban Agriculture: an Approach of Territorial Food Systems in Chinese Cities

Yichi Zhang
University of Oslo, Norway

Abstract

Urban agriculture, with undertaking agricultural practices in the urban areas, is emerging in major Chinese cities in response to the environmental issues entangled with rapid urbanization. The monopolistic land management authority of local governments in Chinese cities provides a striking challenge to contemporary Western bottom-up self-governance via practicing urban agriculture. Beyond existing works, which focus on the impact and design of urban agriculture, this talk contributes to understanding the territorial food systems in China by examining the role of local governments in the implementation process of urban agriculture. Through comparatively studying three cases in pacesetters of urban agriculture in China - ‘Cityfarm’ in Guangzhou, households’ farmlands in Shenzhen, and ‘Zhichuang kitchen garden’ in Shanghai, it aims to fathom how local governments mobilize various environmental policy-innovation based on different urban functional areas. Specifically, local governments comprehensively utilize the methods of setting eco-demonstration sites in the downtown to co-create an environmental information-communication and knowledge-exchange space for residents, organizing residents’ self-governance at residence zones, and adopting decentralized management at urban villages. In doing so, the governments not only arouse the initiative of urban citizens to foster environmental resilience of cities but also collectively progress a societal consensus integrating the governmentality and urban agriculture governance.
Analysis of Spatial Differences Arising from Digital Platforms: Evidence from Livestream E-commerce Platforms in China

Yinghao Zhang\textsuperscript{1,2}, Mingfeng Wang\textsuperscript{1}, Fan Wang\textsuperscript{1}, Tingting Liu\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1}East China Normal University, China. \textsuperscript{2}University of Birmingham, UK. \textsuperscript{3}Utrecht University, Netherlands

Abstract

The application of online digital platforms at the retail side has shaped the emergence and development of the livestream e-commerce industry, which has overgrown under the influence of the Covid-19 and has provided new opportunities and approaches to regional economic development at the same time may have exacerbated inter-regional inequalities. We combine relevant findings from path dependency theory in evolutionary economic geography and recent research on agency to construct an analytical framework of networked regional structure and multi-scale agency. We empirically demonstrate this with livestream e-commerce data at the city level in China. Our study finds apparent regional differences in the development of livestream e-commerce in China, with high-value agglomerations mainly concentrated in regions that are already at a high level of economic development and regions that are otherwise economically backward, where live e-commerce is also poorly developed. Primarily, the most significant regional variability and spatial unevenness in the sales of live-streaming e-commerce are found in the core regions of the Yangtze River Delta and the Pearl River Delta, with significantly high and high clustering areas. Through empirical tests of the influencing factors, we found that the development of livestream e-commerce depends on the structural foundation already in the region and has a lot to do with the multi-scale agency.
Responsible Investment: developing Natural Capital Funds for local benefit

Chris Short
University of Gloucestershire, UK

Abstract

This paper will explore how Natural Capital offers opportunities and challenges for emerging initiatives that promote and broker investment in natural capital projects. It will focus on the example of a local Natural Capital Fund currently in development, the Nature and Climate Fund (GCNF) and associated governance in the county of Gloucestershire, England. It will explore tensions between meeting the needs and expectations of investors, the environment and local communities, and how these may present challenges and opportunities for local projects and organisations. The paper explores issues around proximity, transparency and the possible impacts on local economies.
The hidden role of small-scale farming in our globalised food system

Oliver Taherzadeh, José Mogollón
Leiden University, Netherlands

Abstract

Recent studies have sought to explore the contribution of small-scale farming to food security within the countries they operate. Yet, in our globalised food system, small-scale farmers meet transboundary food needs. Only when viewed through the lens of global consumption can the importance of small-scale farming be fully understood. This study distinguishes the role of small-, medium- and large-scale farms in meeting current food demands, in individual countries and globally. This study distinguishes the role of small-, medium- and large-scale farms in meeting current food demands, in individual countries and globally. Preliminary results, to be presented in full for 180 countries, reveal the role of small-scale farmers in national and global food security has been significantly underestimated due to the localised focus of previous studies (Herrero, et al. 2017; Lowder, et al. 2016; 2021; Ricciardi, et al. 2018). Particularly in the OECD, our results indicate dependence on small-scale farmers has been underestimated by as much as 20% and that they satisfy at least one-third of national food supply in high income nations and 60-70% in low income nations. Such findings challenge the prevailing view that tackling the crises of the global industrial food complex (e.g. malnutrition, resource depletion, and food insecurity) requires a departure from smallholder farming and a shift towards large-scale industrial agriculture. The analysis also brings into sharp focus the need for greater support for smallholder livelihoods in the sustainable food system agenda.
Municipal capacity for transformative experimentation: how much of a constraint is projectification?

Emilia Smeds
University of Westminster, UK

Abstract

How local autonomy is shaped by structuring of funding opportunities by higher-level government is a long-established research theme. Studies of experimentation in UK and European cities have found that reliance on short-term, project-based and competitive funding is a major constraint on local actors’ capacities (Ehnert et al. 2018, Schwanen 2015, Hodson et al. 2018, Smeds and Acuto 2018). Hodson et al. (2013) have shown how this may lead to ‘piecemeal’, rather than ‘systemic’, modes of urban energy innovation. Recently, these debates have been recast as ‘projectification’ of urban experimentation (Torrens and von Wirth 2020): the increasing reliance on temporary organising within the public sector (Godenhjelm et al. 2015).

This paper engages this debate with a focus on municipal government capacity for experimenting with urban mobility innovations in ways that are transformative and may contribute to transitions towards post-car cities (Smeds and Acuto 2018, Smeds 2021). We extend Hodson et al.’s (2013) framework by drawing on organisational studies literature (Lundin and Söderholm 1995). We argue for a distinction between two dimensions of projectification: 1) forms of organising experiments, e.g. as a fixed-term project; and 2) funding that is awarded on a project basis, short-term and/or competitive. Mobility funding landscapes are examined as a driver that may cause experimentation to be organised in project-based, piecemeal forms.

We ask: how much of a constraint is projectification on municipal capacity, compared to other constraints on local autonomy in the context of state restructuring and austerity urbanism (Peck 2012)? This is answered through a comparative analysis of Bristol City Council and New York City government from 1996-2016, as contrasting cases with high and low degrees of fiscal autonomy, and representative cases of UK and US multi-scalar governance contexts. The study draws on large-N databases on the outcomes of 108 experiments, 48 interviews, and analysis of funding and municipal budget data.

Consumer perceptions of blended hydrogen from live domestic trials

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\textsuperscript{1}Keele University, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Exeter University, UK

Abstract

Low-carbon hydrogen has the potential to decarbonize heating and cooking in UK homes, where 85\% of homes are on the gas grid. A stepping stone to the hydrogen economy lies in the potential of blending hydrogen into the gas grid, allowing the utilization of existing appliances and infrastructure with no consumer disruption, while still delivering material carbon reductions if generated from a low carbon source. However, despite the lack of physical disruption to consumers, public acceptance of hydrogen in the home is still critical to any wider deployment of blended hydrogen. Trials have been carried out on both a private (Keele University) and public (Winlaton, Gateshead) network in England to establish the safety and technical case to support the evidence base for the deployment of up to a 20\%(vol) hydrogen blend with natural gas in the current gas network. These trials have also provided the first opportunity in the UK to explore consumer perceptions of hydrogen of those experiencing hydrogen in their own home. This paper presents the results from a study exploring perceptions of consumers who have taken part in the live trials of blended hydrogen, and compares perceptions before the trial started and after they had experienced blended hydrogen in the home for several months. These findings have implications to our understanding of the likely public acceptance of hydrogen in the home as part of a net zero transition, and can help inform communication and engagement approaches to support future place-based hydrogen projects as well as the successful rollout of other sustainable energy technologies across the UK.
Defining sustainable Short Food Supply Chain (SFSC) models using the regional co-creation approach

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Abstract

The agroBRIDGES project aims at empowering farmers with practical knowledge and tools to set up new business models based on Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs), building bridges between producers and consumers. Project activities are focused on regions across 12 European countries: Ireland, Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Turkey.

During co-creation workshops, involving groups of local stakeholders in the agri-food sector, good practices of SFSCs were discussed and evaluated, the most significant barriers to SFSCs were selected, and solutions were proposed. Through brainstorming exercises, participants contributed to the definition of new and improved business and marketing models for SFSCs.

Meaningful insights collected through the co-creation activities were analysed, leading to the categorisation of the defined SFSC models into types and levels of proximity based on physical, organisational, and social factors. Five main types of SFSC models were identified, further analysed using the Business Model Canvas and Value Proposition Canvas: a) Community Supported Agriculture, b) Face-to-Face, c) Local Food Trade, d) Online Food Trade, e) Improved Logistics. They were then sorted out using common attributes, to further conduct sustainability assessment for each and develop marketing strategies to enable producers strengthen their position in the value chain.
Subjects of injustice: a Tanzanian case study of REDD+ and human rights

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Abstract

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) is a global carbon offsetting policy for introducing financial incentives, intended to slow forest conversion, into contexts where forests are under risk but formal protected area status does not already exist. Such commodification of forest carbon enacts a double valuation of nature, profiting not only from nature’s use but again from nature’s repair. Typically, in REDD+’s target areas entrenched inequities in terms of power wealth and social status of the actors present are found. Consequently, an unquantified number of REDD+ cases implemented to date have shown adverse effects for local communities ranging from contested rights and benefits to violence and human rights abuses. This article analyses such a case involving unclear and contested land tenure status, boundary conflict and forced evictions in a REDD+ pilot project in Western Tanzania, through an environmental justice lens. The project design itself resembles an Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP), which has no successful track record. This research uses an interactionist, social science approach with in depth interviews, judicial research and archival analysis to understand the perspectives of marginalized groups and the justifications for their treatment by those involved in project implementation. These findings highlight firstly the urgent need for human rights considerations to feature much more prominently in the scheme design of REDD+ and other forest carbon offsetting projects, as a matter of environmental justice and secondly for future policies addressing forest governance to be reframed to explicitly acknowledge the justice claims of those subjected to them.
What is the role of Community Food Businesses in building Territorial Food Systems in the UK?

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\textsuperscript{1}Coventry University, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Real Farming Trust, UK

Abstract

A key component of Territorial Food Systems concerns grass-roots social innovations and self-organised community-scale ‘alternative’ agri-food models. Examples include an array of ‘Community Food Businesses (CFBs)’, such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) schemes, food hubs and producer co-operatives. These CFBs are typically aligned to principles and practices of agroecology and draw upon and champion Short Food Supply Chains as the vital capillaries through which food is procured and where producers-consumers can ‘reconnect’ to (re)build solidarity and implement collaborative solutions to socio-ecological problems within territories.

However, the role that CFBs have in (re)shaping the Territorial Food System(s) in which they are enmeshed, and how they are interconnected with other territorial stakeholders, is not well understood. We bridge this gap by drawing on multiple cases/examples of CFBs in the UK. Through our mixed-method participatory research within the Loans for Enlightened Agriculture Programme (LEAP), we have gained a deep insight into the nuances of how CFBs operate, their aspirations, challenges, and thus the role they play in developing Territorial Food Systems that can truly deliver urgent sustainability transitions.

We argue that for Territorial Food Systems to ‘work’ in practice, CFBs as self-organised community scale initiatives need to be understood as heterogenous and with often very different organisational goals and modus operandi. Indeed, the tendency to ‘romanticise’ small-scale initiatives as a normative component of Territorial Food Systems needs to be confronted, with greater emphasis and recognition placed on their diversity and idiosyncratic impacts and goals. Furthermore, CFBs often lack the capacity and/or resources to network and communicate their impacts, and therefore what they bring to the territorial table is typically sporadic or fragmented; stymieing the development of important partnerships and collaborations that are needed to ‘connect up the dots’ within territories. Within this context, we close the paper by reflecting on the utility of the term Territorial Food Systems and propose recommendations for future research at the interface between territory and CFBs.
Place Recovery; An Insider’s Perspective

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Abstract

As a professional working within place management, I have been directly involved at the local level for many years in responding to various crises affecting towns, cities and communities. More recently, I have moved back into academia (as a part time PhD student), researching the notion of "place leadership", focusing specifically on Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in UK & Ireland, whilst continuing my professional role as a BID manager.

These dual positions, however, are generative of particular tensions, as I fluctuate between an insider/outsider perspective on the role of BIDs and their function within active local networks and partnerships, working with groups of people who aim to bring about place-based improvement. In addition, going beyond my professional and academic work, I would also consider myself as an insider - both with regard to the BID sector, but also as a committed community representative, with other concerns beyond research and practice, about the place where I live and work. These multiple and sometimes conflicting roles raise a number of questions about the nature of effective place leadership and how this phenomena can be analysed and understood in relation to supporting places in their post-pandemic recovery. Ultimately, critical accounts of BIDs and other place-based organisations, perhaps need to acknowledge the nuances and complexities arising from the practicalities of this work.
An Overview of Challenge and Opportunity for Taiwanese Small Scale Fish Farmers to Participate in Territorial Food Systems

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Abstract

A territorial perspective to food systems and the development of alternative food networks (AFNs) are considered effective ways to deal with the environmental and socio-economic impacts of our current globalized and industrialized food systems. In the past few decades, various AFN-based tactics have been developed to re-localize food systems, to re-build territorial food system and to support rural development. However, the relationship between the application of AFNs, territorial food governance (TFG) and rural development is still ambiguous. Through a comparative analysis of the aquaculture food networks of different species in Taiwan, this study reviews challenges and opportunities for Taiwanese small scale fish farmers to participate in territorial food systems. In this paper we focus on the glocal context where the farmers operate, and simultaneously we examine which conditions are favorable to the development of AFNs. The findings of this study deepen the current understanding of AFNs and TFG in a glocal context and indicate its potential contribution to rural development.
Culture Matters: Embodiment and Agroecological Knowledge Exchange in Community Kitchens

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Abstract

Agroecology is often referred to as a science, movement and practice (Wezel et al., 2009) that advocates context-sensitive approaches to local food systems. One of its ten core interdependent principles is “culture and food traditions”; however, a lack of understanding of culture within agroecology is a resurfacing systemic concern. Spaces of communal eating, such as community kitchens emerge as a promising medium for tackling this knowledge gap. Community kitchens have existed around the world for different purposes, from addressing food insecurity to social cohesion to re-educating peoples about their indigenous food systems. As sites of food transformation and consumption, as well as sites of encounter with the other and inevitably with ourselves, they have three offerings for agroecology: 1) a foundational linkage between farm and table 2) a much-needed in-depth understanding of culture through an examination of traditional diets, recipes and practices around commensality 3) a place to envision a socially and economically just local and global food system. Based on these potentialities, this paper reports on transdisciplinary research which broadly aims to question the ways in which knowledge exchange within community kitchens influences people’s relationship with their food systems and with each other, thus contributing to holistic wellbeing. An uncommon but vital entry point for the study of food culture in community kitchens is embodiment, which is gaining momentum within the field of visceral geography. Embodiment is necessary for decolonisation as it liberates the many hidden marginalised non-colonial knowledges around food and food systems. The power of the body as a political medium comes through in individual and collective embodiment. The paper suggests that this may serve as a conduit for consciousness-raising around alternative food choices, thus effecting socio-political change because of the community kitchen encounters.
New Fields of Urban Transport Governance in an era of Digital Platforms: Configurations, Capacities and Contentions

Mike Hodson, Andrew McMeekin, Andy Lockhart
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

Digital mobility platforms have become increasingly pervasive in urban mobility contexts over the last decade or so. These digital innovations include ride-hailing, bike-sharing, micro-mobility, mapping, payment and other forms of digital platform, together creating multiple forms of new urban transport provision. The way these innovations are becoming embedded in specific urban settings raises important questions about whether they may be integrated with, operate in parallel to, or in conflict with established urban public transport systems. Such platformisation processes, in turn, create novel challenges for urban transport governance.

Drawing on Strategic Field Analysis (SFA), we address the question: how and why are digital mobility platforms reconfiguring fields of urban public transport (in English city-regions)? We use SFA to illuminate: 1) how new combinations of incumbents and new entrants (across state, market and civil society sectors) are reconstituting urban transport fields; 2) how local capacities to govern, especially those of metropolitan transport authorities (MTAs), are responding to the challenge of governing novel multi-scalar and multi-sectoral field arrangements; and 3) how MTAs negotiate the bumpy ride of platformisation through politicised ‘episodes of contention’ in struggles to retain control over the provision of urban transport services. We illustrate how SFA brings new insights to the study of shifting urban governance through critical investigation of the aforementioned issues with examples from a wider project on digital platforms and the future of urban mobility in three English city-regions.
21st Urbanization and Grand Challenges for Global Sustainability

Karen Seto
Yale University, USA

Abstract

The pace and reach of contemporary urbanization are unprecedented. Every day, an area equal to about 20,000 soccer fields become converted to urban uses. Every ten days, the global urban population increases by about one million. Currently, urban areas contribute to about 67-72% of global emissions. With urban land areas expected to triple in size between 2015 and 2050, massive infrastructure build-up will result in carbon lock-in and the global share of future urban GHG emissions will increase through 2050. In this talk, I will discuss trends in urbanization and the challenges they present for global sustainability. I will present key findings from the 2022 IPCC report and other new results that document the effects of urbanization on land, biodiversity, food systems, and regional and global climate.
The continuing need for centering the political drivers of everyday vulnerability and chronic crisis in emergencies: Middleton and O'Keefe's "Disaster and Development" 25 years on.

Paul O'Keefe
Rutgers University, USA

Abstract

This paper is written as if a foreword to Middleton and O'Keefe (1998), 25 years later. Although the authors are both passed, the centrality of their argument to understanding the interconnectedness of global social, environmental and geopolitical forces. From climate change, the pandemic response, humanitarian response to war, chronic hunger, the abandonment and/or rejection of the Development project in parts of the world, political decisions frame questions of who is vulnerable, to what, and who deserves help. The framing of certain things as emergencies both opens up the space for new sociopolitical imaginaries, while simultaneously justifying them as one-off measures, to disappear as normality returns.

Disasters and development have long been understood on a continuum. The same is true for the relationship between those made vulnerable through chronic crises of sustainable livelihood production and reproduction. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted this pointedly on all scales. The IPCC WG2 has had another iteration, again circling closer and closer to the argument, and the case studies, laid out in this book a generation ago.

The presentation will also serve to introduce the context of the other presenters in the sessions "Disaster, Development and Humanitarian Reason" - and draw links between the Middleton and O'Keefe book and the other discussants in the session.
Opportunities for municipal authorities to support novel mobility services

Susanne Stenberg, Håkan Burden
RISE Research Institutes of Sweden, Sweden

Abstract

Municipal authorities in Sweden struggle with understanding their mandate to support novel mobility services (Hult et al. 2021). From a legal analysis of EU regulations (EU, 2007) and national laws we conclude that the mandate is more permissive than generally perceived.

Municipal public transport authorities may procure services delivered by local service providers such as community associations, either by EU’s standardized procurement process or through a simplified process. The latter posts requirements on the size of the service in terms of involved vehicles and total mileage of the service. However, to comply with being a public transport operator can still pose an administrative burden for community associations. An alternative is therefore to temporarily support local mobility services through municipal funds for development, as long as the rules for funding are transparent and non-discriminatory. The funding can still be governed by a public transport authority with the long-term ambition to develop capabilities within both municipal authorities and community associations towards the procurement of novel services.

Two local ridesharing services delivered by community associations (Hult et al., 2021) served as reference cases for the analysis, complemented by in-depth focus interviews with municipal policy makers, thus addressing the research gap between applied transportation policy studies and policy making (Marsden and Reardon, 2017).

EU regulation 1370/2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road.


Local governance of transport innovation: the English e-scooter trials as a case study

Lorna Stevenson
University of Westminster, UK

Abstract

Achieving Net Zero is a significant challenge for the transport sector, requiring technological innovation, behaviour change and political will (Brand, Anabel, and Marsden 2021). The UK government has set ambitious decarbonisation targets, but much of the responsibility for achieving them rests with local government, who face significant constraints on their ability to act (Mardsen et al., 2014). This paper reports a transport innovation governed at multiple-levels: the English e-scooter trials. Thirty-two local areas opted-in to a trial, encompassing the diversity of local transport governance from regional combined authorities to small district councils. I will share early findings of qualitative interviews investigating their experience. I consider the policy aims of e-scooter trials, reflecting on critiques of the role of bike share in a just transition (Médard de Chardon, 2019). I then explore shifting power dynamics between national, local and private-sector actors as the trials unfolded. Compared to similar transport innovations (Sherrif et al., 2020, Dudley et al., 2021) local government exerted significant power over private-sector operators, but were occasionally frustrated by lack of influence over and consideration from national government. Operators invested significant resources in building good relationships with local areas. This ‘loaning’ of private sector expertise may have mitigated some austerity effects but raises questions over ownership and use of Smart Mobility data (Docherty, Marsden and Anabel, 2018). Local areas often devalued their own input: trials costings frequently did not take into account significant council officer time spent facilitating them. The e-scooter trials functioned as a form of strategic niche management (Schot and Geels, 2008) whereby, having expended political capital by opting-in, local authorities become invested in their success and worked with operators to mould e-scooter hire into a publicly-acceptable innovation. I conclude by considering on which metrics e-scooter trials might be considered successful.
Smart modular living: A qualitative study of peoples’ perceptions of smart modular home living in the UK.

Valentine Seymour, Maria Xenitidou, Lada Timotijevic, Charo Hodgkins, Eleanor Radcliffe, Bigitta Gatersleben, Nigel Gilbert, Chris. R. Jones
University of Surrey, UK

Abstract

Researchers have been investigating smart technologies and modular homes for 20 years to address sustainable future living needs. Smart modular homes combine smart technologies and internal modular spaces, that can be adapted to suit the occupier’s changing needs over time. Despite the growing interest, their adoption remains low. This owes to the tendency for research to often use a technological-centred approach. Visions of smart homes and their technological features may therefore not have been fully based on a clear understanding of users’ needs and sociotechnical issues of concern.

Enabling people to have a role in shaping the future of smart modular homes in the early stages of the design process have been widely recommended as well as understand foreground conditions impacting their willingness to adopt them. Specifically, there have been calls to engage people in sharing responsibility for effectively domesticating technologies into life and ‘home’ systems.

This paper introduces the use of a Think Aloud interview method to enabling people to have a role in shaping the future of smart modular homes and related sociotechnical issues. This is an understudied area of research that would be considerably valuable for researchers and practitioners in the smart home sectors. The University of Surrey is working in partnership with MyGlobalHome to trial and demonstrate a state-of-the-art modular, smart home concept on the University campus. Findings from this paper are based on 20 interviews with staff and students from the University of Surrey as a case study, exploring their perceptions of home, as well as opinions on smart modular homes and related sociotechnical issues. A set of recommendation are developed to provide guidance and suggested actions on approaching these issues in the future.
A-Maize-ing knowledge: Understanding the potential of traditional agricultural systems in a changing climate in Mexico and Belize

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Abstract

Climate change effects have been seen across different regions of the globe; however, in Latin America and the Caribbean, its impacts have been very strongly felt by small-scale farmers who still practice traditional farming that is highly dependent on rainfall. In the Yucatan Peninsula, these effects have severely impacted communities that still practice rainfed agriculture. Milpa, is a rain-fed polyculture in which maize is planted together with beans, squashes, and other crops under a biocultural approach and managed in many ways using traditional ecological knowledge. It has been of great interest, not only due to its vulnerability to extreme weather events such as droughts and hurricanes, but because it has remained present in the livelihoods, culture, and local economy of this communities for centuries, providing income, food security, and cultural identity.

Climatic variability, its impact on milpa, and how local societies adapt to climatic disturbances in this region has been explored by different authors; however, limited studies have compared transnational adaptation responses in similar milpa systems and the role of traditional knowledge in this adaptation strategies. By drawing on data collection from multiple case studies and surveys, this research aims to understand what aspects smallholder farmers in Mexico and Belize prioritize in the face of climate change; how they use and adapt knowledge based on these priorities; and on their exposure to certain environmental, socio-economic, and institutional factors, and the implications of this on local food systems and on local adaptation strategies.
Contested street experiments: issue formation, conflict dynamics and mobility justice

Enrica Papa, Emilia Smeds
University of Westminster, UK

Abstract

Associated with the planning model of ‘tactical urbanism’ and accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, ‘city street experiments’ or experimental changes in street use, regulation and/or form aimed at exploring contextually-novel innovations (Bertolini 2020), have become increasingly prominent. Street space reallocations have been contested, with the temporality of experiments creating specific dynamics.

Experiments can provide an issue focus for the formation of new publics and conflict could indicate that experiments have a high potential for mobilising local people. Conflicts can be productive for neighbourhood politics in allowing the negotiation of competing agendas among diverse groups (Verloo and Davis 2021). On the other hand, conflicts are processes in which epistemic and procedural injustices (Sheller 2018) can be produced.

This paper takes an approach that centres non-expert perspectives on street experiments, seeking to draw together a focus on mobility justice with the urban conflicts literature. We present research on parklets-come-Mobility Hubs and School Streets in the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Redbridge. Online surveys, on-street interviews and workshops exploring how local people use, perceive and experience street changes; supplemented with interviews with planning practitioners and civil society groups.

Preliminary findings reveal that in Redbridge, local experts frame experiments as mobility infrastructures, whereas non-experts primarily understand them as social infrastructures related to the future of the high street. In Lambeth’s case, the ‘school gate’ and car-free road functions as both social and mobility infrastructure, yet everyday uses and meanings are overshadowed by debates regarding low-traffic neighbourhoods. The paper thus will consider how the dynamics of publics forming around specific issues shape conflict processes and affects epistemic and procedural justice in neighbourhood change.

Key references

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Fast-paced mobility data for long-term urban policy: building multi-year digital travel diaries from smart card data to evaluate social inclusion on transport systems

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Abstract

In this paper, we will discuss the value of large volumes of smart card data records for transport geography, research and policy. We will report methods and results from processing nine years of smart card data to build digital travel diaries for a large number of elderly concessionary passengers resident in the second-largest metropolitan region of the UK. A challenge in linking historical smart card data lies in inconsistent formats and missing spatial data. We develop a spatio-temporal pairing algorithm that iteratively matches smart card transactions to scheduled services recorded in timetables. This approach allows us to infer individuals’ trip origins, destinations and other derived trip characteristics including, travel time, distance and trips by other modes over a longer time frame. Anonymous passenger databases allow us to link these characteristics to passenger age, gender and ethnic background and study social and spatial inequalities in daily mobility in later life. Building robust travel diaries over long time horizon will present a novel resource that can contribute to the evaluation of differential short and long-term impacts of policy action, for example to identify the degree to which the regional transport systems promote inclusive, sustainable and healthy mobility. We will conclude with further reflections on the strengths and limitations of fast mobility data in informing policy aimed at addressing long-term urban challenges, such as social inclusion and decarbonisation.
Transition pathways in the tourism industry: a conceptual discussion based on the multi-level perspective

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Abstract

Early transition studies have primarily addressed consolidated supply-side industries such as automotive and energy. By contrast, the tourism industry is situated down-stream the value chain and is more fragmented. Thus there is a need to elaborate on the validity of transition frameworks in tourism studies (Niewiadomski & Brouder, 2021). To map the field and open future research paths, this conceptual paper investigates the usefulness of the multilevel perspective (Geels, 2002) and its associated transition pathways – substitution, transformation, reconfiguration, de-alignment and re-alignment (Geels & Schot, 2007) – for tourism research. A significant part of the tourism industry’s environmental impact stems from its travel intensity. Gössling, Scott, and Hall (2021) show that recent global crises have not had any lasting effects on air travel behaviours. The most recent one, COVID-19, has resulted in extensive substitution of personal meetings with digital meetings (Hiselius & Arnfalk, 2021). But although this may have a lasting effect on business meetings, the multifaceted experiences of travel-based tourism are difficult to replicate with digital platforms. Still, there may be lasting effects in terms of sustained preferences for domestic rather than international travel, or virtual and hybrid conferences, something that could result in a transformation or even a reconfiguration to make tourism less travel intensive (Tao, Steckel, Klemeš, & You, 2021). Such pathways will necissiate institutional changes (Brouder, 2020). The long-term term effects of COVID-19 cannot be evaluated yet, but Gössling et al. (2021) discuss how analogies between the pandemic and the ongoing climate crisis could have cumulative effects, imposing forceful pressures and possibly initiating a de-alignment and realignment pathway that results in an even more radical transition. According to Boluk, Cavaliere, and Higgins-Desbiolles (2019), such a transition will depend on an operationalisation of the global agenda reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Goals into an agenda for sustainable tourism.
Multiple vulnerabilities - examining the food and fuel poverty nexus

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Abstract

Literature reviews of research on connections between food poverty and other socio-economic disadvantages have found that there is a lack of consideration of the intersectionality of vulnerability types and multiple hardships, such as choosing between heating and eating. Foodbank (2017) reports that, two in five food insecure Australians have not paid bills in order to have enough money to buy food. With food insecurity, the “heat or eat” dilemma occurs when households are forced to decide between nutritious food and adequate energy services. This in turn increases vulnerability to cold and heat by reducing resilience and the capability to cope. Energy, food and poverty scholars argue more information and analysis are required, in Australia and world over, to assess connections with this material and experiential hardship. By studying the energy-food-poverty nexus through the lens of environmental justice (Walker 2009) and capabilities (Sen 1993), at the household level, this paper looks at poverty and ontological security as ongoing spatio-temporal outcomes of sets of practices and provides new insights into how multiple vulnerabilities are produced and exaggerated. The paper will analyse over 70 household interviews conducted in low income areas across multiple sites in Australia to examine the ways in which household practices and policies relate to food and energy insecurity.
The impacts of the modifiable spatial unit problem (MSUP) on social equity analysis of public transit reliability

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Abstract

This study aims to examine whether the results of social equity analysis on public transit reliability are sensitive to the choice of spatial unit of analysis (i.e., modifiable spatial unit problem (MSUP)). Using the city of Winnipeg as an example, we investigate the social equity of bus on-time performance (OTP) and pass-up distribution at multiple levels (e.g., stop, route, neighborhood) and compare the results. Neighborhoods are classified as minority vs. non-minority population dominant neighborhoods and transit routes and stops are classified into minority vs. non-minority population serving ones according to the socioeconomics of residents. We conduct an equity assessment by calculating 1) the number of pass-ups, 2) the number of bus deviations (e.g., early arrivals, delays) from the predetermined schedule, and 3) the average deviations time (in seconds) that occurred on minority vs. non-minority serving routes/stops as well as in minority vs. non-minority dominant neighborhoods. We also consider different day types (e.g., weekdays, weekends) and disability status (e.g., wheelchair, regular passengers) in the equity assessment. While the route-level results depict that transit service reliability is equitable, results of the neighborhood and stop-level analysis reveal inequities in the distribution of the OTP and pass-ups in the city. Our findings demonstrate that different levels of spatial aggregation can significantly change the results of social equity analysis of public transit reliability, thereby leading to misleading conclusions that fail to capture the inequity due to the existence of MSUP. The results of this paper provide insights to transit authorities, planners, and policymakers for diagnosing the social equity landscape of transit reliability in a more robust manner.
Opportunistic Obedient Resistance: Using the Legitimising Narrative of the State to Resist Redevelopment-induced Displacement in Addis Ababa

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Abstract

Between 2009 and 2017, Addis Ababa City Government demolished about 400 hectares of inner-city slum settlements by displacing tens of thousands of households to the periphery. Previous studies presented the residents as passive victims of state-led redevelopment interventions by an authoritarian state. The emerging subaltern urbanism literature is also heavily skewed to subversive strategies of the urban poor in response to urban exclusion and limited in capturing urban struggle through authorised formal channels. However, some inner-city residents in Addis Ababa, when faced with displacement to remote and underdeveloped parts of the city, demanded their right to the city through authorised channels appealing to senior officials to avoid state repression of outright resistance. They framed their claims referring to promises of state officials and appealing to the developmental commitment of the state, pitting lower officials against higher officials, and actively seeking media attention. The article compares their strategy with two concepts developed elsewhere that capture claim-making “within the official discourse of deference” in similar authoritarian political contexts. Through identifying the shared features and differences with the two concepts developed elsewhere, this article proposes the conceptual construct “opportunistic obedient resistance” to capture the nuances of the agency of Addis Ababa inner-city residents in strategically minimising political repercussions of resisting state-led redevelopment interventions and tact in gaining support for their claim from senior state officials. The article makes a conceptual contribution to capture a specific form of urban resistance that transpires without challenging the status quo in developmentally-committed and authoritarian states.
For the UK to meet its climate change targets, we need to significantly reduce how much we drive. New technologies, such as electric cars, will not be enough to reduce our carbon footprint without an overall reduction in car use. Reducing car use is also expected to bring many other benefits, such as reducing air pollution and improved public health from more active travel and fewer vehicle collisions.

Yet almost every year both the number of cars in the UK and how far we drive them increases [1]. Reversing this upwards trend will be very difficult, so we must learn from places that are already succeeding. Car ownership per person varies a lot at a local level, from as low as 0.05 to over one car per person. In many areas, it is rising, but in a few, it is falling.

Our research proposes identifying the areas where car ownership has declined and then work out what is different about those areas. We will look for possible explanations, such as the construction of a new rail line, which would be expected to reduce car use. We aim to produce a set of case studies that can be replicated across the country to help meet our climate change targets.
Social Networks and the Geography of Brexit: Evidence from Import Shocks

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Abstract

Political geographers have long been interested in social networks as sources of contextual effects on voting behaviour. Geographic neighborhoods have often featured as proxies for individuals’ social networks in previous studies, partly owing to the challenges associated with collecting data on interpersonal social ties at scale. Whilst there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the relationship between physical distance and social interaction holds strong, its imperfect nature is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. Technological developments since the start of the century have dramatically decreased the cost of interactions over long distances, which many claim has widened the physical and social spaces over which contextual effects on voting behaviour may manifest. This study empirically examines this proposition. Do social networks have observable effects on electoral outcomes over long distances? In tackling this question, the study relies on a novel dataset on interregional social ties based on the near-universe of friendships on one of the world’s largest online social networks. It specifically focuses on the 2016 UK EU Membership Referendum as its case study: one of the most prominent political events in recent history, which was also incidentally followed by widespread speculation on the role of online social networks on the referendum outcome. Looking at English and Welsh local authorities, the study adopts a spatial econometric framework and an instrumental variables approach based on the heterogeneous exposure of local industries to import competition. Overall, the study provides new insights on the political implications of spatial inequalities in the 21st century and on how new sources of social network data may be used to revitalise research in electoral geography.
The Knee, the Fist, and the Neck: Choreopolitics in Diversity's (2020) Black Lives Matter Dance Performance

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Abstract

In September 2020, popular dance troupe, Diversity, performed a powerful movement piece on ITV’s ‘Britain’s Got Talent’, commenting upon 2020’s turbulent times through dance, and most notably, in solidarity with the protest movement Black Lives Matter. Combining street dance, poetry and music, Diversity’s political choreography, or ‘choreopolitics’ (Lepecki, 2013), broadcast live on television, sparked national conversations on racism, police brutality, and activism’s ‘role’ in popular culture, generating over 20,000 Ofcom complaints. This paper takes Diversity’s performance as a pertinent example of dancing protest and performative politics, which creatively engaged with an inherently embodied heritage, drawing upon a bodily archive of Black historical protest. Through non-representational theory, dance offers cultural geographers a unique opportunity to investigate embodiment and affective experience (Thrift, 1997; McCormack, 2014), yet this is often criticised for ignoring dance’s socio-cultural contexts and historical processes of power (Cresswell, 2006; Tolia-Kelly, Waterton and Watson, 2017). Diversity’s ‘dancing politics’ offers an opportunity to analyse the ‘moving body’, without overlooking dance’s political affect or semiotic meanings, lending itself to a ‘more-than-representational’ approach (Lorimer, 2005). This allows corporeal movement to be broken down, to understand how non-verbal, gestural political messages are scripted, historically-situated, and viscerally felt. This paper analyses three bodily movements and motifs within Diversity’s performance: the raised fist, taking the knee, and choreographies of the neck, including the re-enactment of George Floyd’s death, in support of 2020’s Black Lives Matter protests. These three performative gestures are investigated to understand how this choreography creatively evoked an embodied heritage and memories of past bodily protest in the present, whilst working to imagine alternative futures. This paper explores how dance can work as an agentic practice of resistance, by tapping into a bodily archive of historical struggles, to create performative politics and ignite processes of transformation, in support of an international social movement.
Sustainable water management in shared territories used by communal groups

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Abstract

This presentation will first introduce a recently published book entitled “Manatiales y lavanderas en la Paz” that provides an outlook on the importance of communal water spaces used by women in La Paz, Bolivia and by whole communities through different forms of social interaction. From this work, we enquire community groups and monitor water quality to establish the relationship between landscape, water use and preservation as elements that contribute to the processes of territorial contestation. This serves to document territories in conflict and accumulate territorial knowledge through interdisciplinary social and engineering assessments. From this, the co-production of alternatives for sustainable water management is established to highlight practices that can help preserve and recover historically used water territories that could be in risk of disappearing if a generalised management of resources and urban-central view is applied.
Dealing with Sweaty Veg; Understanding household practices for managing food and plastic waste.

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Abstract

Public concerns about plastic pollution have driven new forms of activity aiming to reduce the amount of plastic that becomes waste. Food packaging is one significant contributor to this waste, and reducing the amount of packaging used on fresh produce has recently become more prominent in the policy-making agendas of government and businesses, but questions have remained as to the possible relationships between the production of plastic waste and food waste. Packaging for fresh food items have long been understood to have the potential to extend shelf-life, but this has been challenged by new research from WRAP (2022) utilising the Household Simulation Model (HHSM) (Kandemir et al, 2020), which suggests in fact that household food waste may be reduced if less plastic food packaging is used. This paper presents the results of further qualitative research conducted with households to support and validate a new and updated version of the HHSM that can incorporate plastic waste, and offers new insights into the dynamics between plastic waste and food waste related practices in the home. The research was informed by Practice Theory and used a combination of interviews and diary methods to explore processes of disposal in the home, in the context of daily routines, shopping patterns, and household planning. It has highlighted particular beliefs and negative attitudes regarding plastic packaging and its purposes, along with a number of unexpected practices involving packaging and the products within. This paper will comment on the possible origin of these beliefs in dissatisfaction surrounding the role and function of plastic, and will also show how practices relating to plastic waste are closely connected to already-existing concerns about food waste and how they fit into wider household routines, and offer interesting analogues and comparisons to other previous work on Food Waste.
The Art of Movement within Heritage Landscapes

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Abstract

Artist Richard Long emerged in the space created by early conceptual artists with his 1967 art piece “A Line Made by Walking”. This artwork was part of a growing land art movement considering the temporality of art and the inclusion of the everyday in art and art in the everyday. The piece was performed in an unknown field where Long, walking back and forth repeatedly, trod a visible straight line into the grass. He photographed it, and this black and white photograph is the only lasting evidence of the intervention. As a self-declared sculptor his work suggests that walking itself is an act that sculptures the landscape and could be considered an artistic practice. By not focusing on representing or altering the landscape permanently, Longs approach was instead more concerned with experiencing the landscape than creating any durable changes.

With examples of walking methods developed within industrial heritage landscapes, I will consider how our movements, in response with the world we encounter, can help to shape alternative cultural values, and impress a “situated knowledge” that is neither authorised nor restricted by political-aesthetic or human-centric concerns. But instead opens for a “temporality of things” shaped by continuously changing patterns of movement, and the everyday “letting-be” of more-than-human processes.
Nature-based Solutions as Sustainable Water Management option in the era of Climate Change: a case study of Bihar State, India

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Abstract

Adverse effects of the climate change on the agro-based economy of the state of Bihar have made its stakeholders prioritise nature-based solutions (NBS) in dealing with annual inundations-droughts cycles. JAL-JIVAN-HARIYALI (Water-Life-Greenery) Mission is the first state-level NBS adopted 3 years ago with the objectives of climate sustenance, conservation and rejuvenation of water bodies, and to keep ground water pollution free, to ensure potable water availability, to promote climate resilient agriculture, organic farming, afforestation and to encourage usage of solar energy. This study is an assessment of the various projects under this mission and an identification of the socio-economic sectors impacted upon. It is also aimed at evaluating the involvement and empowerment of rural women. The methodology involved secondary data collection, site visits for data corroboration, interviews with policymakers, NGOs and beneficiaries, and in the process, generation of primary data. Use of satellite imageries and GIS interpretation were integrated to identify the problem areas and traditional environmental conservation structures now under disrepair and disuse. Findings included gradual restoration of rural ecosystems with accumulation of water in pre-existing water bodies, increased soil moisture content, planting of trees leading to soil protection and conservation. Economic benefits included increased agricultural production and concomitant increase in family income. Community participation and ownership assisted in bringing out-migration and improvement in family life. Given the social structure, need for sustaining community involvement requires dedicated human resource and sustained business plans, so that operational costs and maintenance of assets created under this mission are sustained.
Ecology of early access to culture/creativity and cultural/creative skills

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Abstract

This paper sets to bring the issue of early access to culture/creativity as well as to opportunities to develop cultural/creative skills into the analysis of creative ecosystems. As the creative industries/economy discourse has made the so-called ‘ecological turn’ (Barker, 2018) in its continuous pursuit of a more holistic understanding of complex interactions and interdependencies inherent to cultural/creative activities in any given location, so far, the issue of early access remained out of the picture. While the role of universities and access to higher education has received a great deal of attention, the role of compulsory (primary and secondary) education and other key aspects of early life (childhood and adolescence) remained largely underexplored. Based on qualitative interviews with creative economy stakeholders across 10 medium-sized European cities (including Dundee and Chatham in the UK), this paper investigates the significance of early access opportunities not only in terms of individual career prospects but in connection to local creative ecology more widely. The research has found that early access to culture/creativity and cultural/creative skills in a city is not limited to the presence and functioning of traditional organisations such as galleries and museums or art and drama schools but is facilitated by a range of additional actors as well as relationships, which this paper introduces and unpacks.
Depoliticization and politicization in smart mobility pilots

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Abstract
Smart mobility endeavors are often rolled out into the urban landscape through pilots, testbeds and urban experiments. These demarcated sociotechnical experiments are collaborative ventures where different actors work together to test/pilot smart solutions – such as autonomous buses – in a seemingly “real-life environment”. Despite their air of creativity and flexibility, pilots are rationalistic tools: They generally forward a particular type of specific and delimited type of knowledge that is seen as “scalable” in the sense that solutions can travel between cities and contexts. Pilots also have a strong emphasis on controllability, and when financed through national- or EU-based project funding, they are often encumbered with demands on set deliverables and organized to enhance comparability and bench-marking. At the same time pilots are – paradoxically – based in a strong notion of learning from “real-life settings”.

Building on previous empirical studies on the local democratic autonomy of public actors in smart mobility pilots (Mukhtar-Landgren 2021), this paper discusses processes of politicization and de-politicization in the governance of smart mobility through pilots and projects. Building primarily on Chantal Mouffe’s conceptualizations of the post-political, three potentially depoliticizing moves are highlighted (i) The ambition to generalize from a delimited group of “real-life users” hides differences and conflicts between different groups and interests in the city. (ii) The assertion that certain forms of scalable and testable knowledge are more legitimate, delimits the space for alternative forms of local and experience-based knowledge. Finally (iii) the tendency to perceive smart city pilots as mere “tests” makes them appear as neutral to political goals. Taken together, these perceptions of knowledge and democratic decision-making configures smart city pilots in potentially depoliticizing ways.

Examining the changing spatial organisation of major advertising agency groups in London

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Abstract

Like most creative and cultural industries, advertising agencies agglomerate within the largest metropolitan areas. However, while much is known about the macro pattern of firm agglomerations within the creative industries, much less is known about intra-firm agglomerations; e.g. the extent to which agencies are owned by the same parent company cluster in space. Drawing upon a case study of the Big 4 advertising agency networks in London developed through the analysis of secondary data, this study makes two key contributions. Firstly, it examines the shifts in the geography of advertising within Central London. Secondly, it contributes to the nascent literature on intra-firm agglomerations by examining the recent trend of spatial and organisational consolidation amongst the largest global advertising agency networks within ‘campuses’. We find that the increasing modularity of advertising production and procurement as well as the pursuit for operational efficiencies and learning synergies has led to the spatial consolidation of these global agency networks. We also find that these global agency networks have different approaches to their spatial structures and real estate strategies. While WPP and Omnicom have opted for single-site campuses located outside the traditional heartland of advertising in London - Soho, Interpublic and Publicis have maintained a dispersed structure with agencies in multiple sites across London.
Creative ecosystems and systemic shocks: Mapping the creative development of Kazakhstan’s new (Astana) and old (Almaty) capital city

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Abstract

In December 1997, Kazakhstan officially announced that the city of Akmola (later Astana, now Nur-Sultan) would be replacing Almaty as its capital city. This initiative to transfer the capital from the vibrant city of Almaty to the then small town of Akmola created a shock in both urban systems, in turn laying an exceptional setting for comparative research on their creative development. This paper maps and analyses the adaptive processes that have taken place in both creative ecosystems in the last 20 years seeking to better understand how and through what processes urban creative ecosystems adapt to systemic shocks of political nature. The paper adopts a complexity theory framework (Comunian, 2011, 2019) that places particular attention on the place-specific context. Building on Markusen et al., (2011) it conceptualises urban creative development as being driven by complex interdependence between four overlapping domains – policy, place, organisations, and people – that end up serving as four overlapping (and nested) units of analysis. This paper maps and analyses the development of the two creative ecosystems in relation to the capital city swap across the four domains. A mixed methods research design is adopted to effectively address each unit. Data for this research was gathered via desk and archival research as well as 49 semi-structured interviews with creative professionals and city-level policymakers in Almaty and Astana.
Exploring the opportunities and limits of participatory action

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Abstract

Participatory approaches as a form of social innovation have the potential to change relations and thus alter/improve institutional arrangements within a policy arena. Given the compulsory EU requirement for stakeholder engagement in rural policy development the potential for improving governance and sustainability through participatory approaches is high, although understanding of how this might be accomplished in practice, over the policy cycle, is limited. The paper examines the effectiveness of an innovative participatory approach applied to rural policy design in Malta. The research builds on work undertaken for the Maltese Government in developing an innovative participatory approach to aid design of the 2014-20 Rural Development Programme. A participatory process was implemented over a 12-month period of with multiple groups of stakeholders in a high conflict policy context. The approach resulted in widespread involvement, agreement, and support for a new strategic rural policy, which did not achieve expected outcomes during the implementation phase. Empirical data (from 2012-13 and 2022) is utilised to assess the extent to which participatory action influenced policy and programme implementation. A grounded theory approach was applied to explain the role of participatory action in changing social relations, leading to transformation in governance over a 10-year policy cycle (2012-22). Although the application of the methodology was limited to a small island state (Malta), the approach and analytical techniques are transferable to other EU states and contexts. The research contributes to current discussions in the field of transformational social innovation.
‘I’m always on the bus’ – precarious bus encounters (during the Covid-19 pandemic) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Sweden

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Abstract

In this paper, we discuss the various ways the bus and bus riding figures in 47 qualitative in-depth interviews with children, young people and parents in three disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods in three middle-sized/large cities in Sweden during the Covid-19 pandemic. Growing up and living in disadvantaged stigmatized neighbourhoods affects the everyday mobilities of parents, young people and children. In general, socio-economic conditions and the presence of criminality and perceptions around safety and risk in stigmatized neighbourhoods, structure the families’ everyday movement in various material ways (Ekman Ladru, Joelsson & Fridén Syrjäpalu, forthcoming). Through the use of Berlant’s (2016) notion of the commons as an “infrastructure for troubling times”, we suggest that the bus system, and the bus as a public space, can be regarded as a commons, i.e. a meaningful but broken infrastructure in the everyday lives and mobilities of children, young people and parents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (cf. Nikolaeva et al 2017). However, although many of the research subjects highlight the importance of the bus in their everyday life, many displayed ambivalences toward the bus as a space, bus dependency and bus mobilities. The research participants’ everyday encounters with/on the bus are more accurately conceptualized as a glitch, i.e. less clear-cut and more ambivalent: of seamless mobilities in relation to (rather than necessarily contrasted to) disruptive mobilities. Perceiving the bus (or public transport in general) as inherently ‘good’ is therefore problematic, as mobility is a form of power rather than resource, imbricated in the very constitution of subjectivity and inequality (Davidson 2021, cf. Sheller 2018).
Facility Location Models for Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Networks: A tool to prioritise streets for the installation of residential infrastructure

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Abstract

A visible barrier to the widespread diffusion of Electric Vehicles are residential locations which lack access to off-street parking. In such locations, residents may find it challenging to recharge an Electric Vehicle while they are at home, which represents one of the main benefits of Electric Vehicle ownership. To circumvent this barrier, one solution is to install on-street residential chargepoints.

To implement such a solution, one pertinent question is how to locate and prioritise streets for infrastructure deployment. This presentation will report on a site selection tool developed to assist in the spatial planning of on-street residential chargepoints. A ranking methodology has been created to order streets based on their need for such infrastructure. This is augmented by a detailed background information of the streets relating to their demographic profiles, registered car fleets, and relevant situational contexts. The tool is currently being trialled by an industry partner in their commercial operations and is forming part of the process of planning roll-out strategies and formatting concession agreements.
Participatory mapping: insights from 4 experiences of the Global South

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Abstract

The interest in participatory methodologies to address the new urban problems is growing. This paradigm shift allows defining new answers and also promoting greater community engagement in the construction of these solutions. Within these, participatory mapping, due to its capacity to inspect the territory by the use that is made of it (as a social and historical fact), allows the recognition, identification, and adaptation of public services to the territory. In this regard, it is a very important methodology for public policies and community mobilization in an attempt to build responses that are more appropriate to local specificities. This talk, therefore, brings insights from four experiences realized or in progress to contribute to the debate:

● Virtual participatory mapping workshop with workers from education, health and social assistance services in the project "Innovation and social policies: integration of knowledge from interdisciplinary training of the territory" (PRG-USP);

● Guidelines for the revision of a virtual platform for social cartography (CulturaEduca) in the project "Development of an online tool for exploring different databases in an interactive and visual way to support educational public policies" (MCTIC-FAPESP);

● Balance of the results of a series of workshops "Participatory mapping: views from territories and social technology for resilient and democratic cities" (Program "Agents of Open Government" of São Paulo);

● Plan of the training of elementary school students in the project "Discovering the path of water: training of young community leaders based on the participatory mapping of the headwater of the Ajuá river" (Incline / Climate-U);
Where has all the knowledge gone? Migrations from the industrial to the cultural and knowledge economy in textile clusters

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Abstract

Craft is a peculiar form of production, representing a crossover between tradition and heritage and industrial innovation. In the post-industrial scenario, how to balance the preservation of traditional skills, while innovating and adapting to evolving conditions, is an ongoing issue for many craft firms. Our study explores how craft firms “craft” this balance between tradition and innovation, contributing to a better understanding of the connections with today’s creative economy. We based our study on firms based in two comparative clusters, Dundee and Veneto, which experienced similar macro dynamics, passing from being key textile centres to becoming marginal areas in the industry. Using qualitative interviews, archival research and observational data, the research explores how these firms have survived and evolved, considering also the role of local communities, policy makers and wider institutions in the (re-)appearance or disappearance of craft firms and skills. Our data highlights that firms in Veneto and Dundee adopted opposite organisational approaches in response to the challenges of the sector, showing on the one hand a strategy of conversion of the target market, while on the other a strategy of conversion of production. The different strategies highlight a transition towards the cultural economy in Veneto, while a transition towards the knowledge economy in Dundee. The findings of this study made us also question the role of local policies in supporting the organisational development of local craft firms, considering also the role of education institutions in their resilience and the impact on their organisational behaviours and long term survival.
From urban social movements to political parties: comparing radical municipalist experiences

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Abstract

The 2010s was marked by mass protests and violent clashes around the world as constellations of social actors took the streets to voice their grievances in the face of deep inequalities and political distrust. This was followed by the passage of new social movements to ‘political movements’ (Karaliotas & Swyngedouw, 2019) that are prefiguring modes of political activism and institutional presence. While academic and media attention has focused on the national politics where such protests took place, there is scant scholarship on how subnational political arenas are being transformed by these social movements. This paper addresses this gap by comparing the experiences of new actors in Spain, Brazil and Argentina using the ‘territory as a catalyst’ (Halvorsen et al., 2019; Briatta et al, 2020) to both their contention and identity formation.

The paper analyses three experiences of institutionalisation of new social movements in politics that are part of the emerging global new municipalism movement, thus responding to calls for comparative and transnational analysis (della Porta & Subirats, 2019). It will examine cases in Barcelona, Belo Horizonte and Rosario. In common, the cases saw the rapid passage from the initial articulation of the movements to electoral success including city mayors, councillors, and regional and national representatives who are predominantly young and previously engaged in protests. Nevertheless, the different political conditions that these groups emerged in opposition allow a rich examination of their abilities to envision new models of territorial development and coexistence.
The challenges of infodemic and cognitive exclusion for participatory approaches in the context of Covid-19

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Abstract

In the context of complex and emergent crisis like Covid-19, it is necessary to recognize the constraints of legitimate participation as well as the emergent misinformation crisis in digital social media. This presentation explores the relevance of the shared dialogue of participatory research approaches in processes of integrating uncertainties to cope with cognitive exclusion and infodemic developments of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some characteristics of participatory research approaches and tools are highlighted, such as multi-level dialogical interactions involving different social actors, empowerment of marginalized people, and mitigation of inequities through transforming the conventional unilateral relationship between science and society into a more fair and more symmetrical interface. The adaptive properties of participatory approaches can help overcome cognitive exclusion and contribute against the anti-dialogical ruptures of the infodemic, contributing to integrating uncertainties. Participatory approaches can be conceived as a methodological asset to boost the dialogical attributes relevant to strengthening a diversity of solutions and knowledges, also stimulating self-reflection among academics.
Tacit need capture through participatory research to increase female access to public transport in new Indian cities

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Abstract

A key driver of urban growth in India in the last four decades is the consistently expanding number of Tier II and Tier III cities (Population from 20,000 to 99,999) that act as satellite cities or stand alone urban growths. The infrastructure design of these cities has followed a conventional centralized and generalized model of development for amenities including public transport. It has been noted that the development plan of infrastructure and amenities, due to multiple factors, has been unable to integrate concerns related to equitable gender access. Longstanding issues of unequal gender access to resources may be perpetuated if restorative policy-making does not take female voices into account. Mobility has been found to be key in gender empowerment, and inequity in access is created when infrastructure and services are created for the default 'generic user'. Policy formulation for large populations is driven by statistical analysis and data models that often do not account separately for females. A participatory approach to policy formulation may give a voice to the tacit, unheard needs of females. We examine mobility as an instrument for empowerment, and trace the evolution, practice and shared outlooks of feminist approaches and participatory design, in the context of new cities of India. In our ongoing research, we analyzed the current mobility toolkit followed in India to inform planning and policy decisions in public transport. We propose a participatory toolkit that can help capture tacit knowledge at the initial stages of data collection and agenda-setting processes to gain insights into the lack of participation of females in public transport in new Indian cities.
Smart and sustainable mobility: is it really for all? Considerations of accessibility and social inclusion within the geography of future mobility.

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Abstract

Infrastructure designers have traditionally put engineering thought and process at the forefront of global mobility solutions, addressing the challenge of movement of goods and people in as fast and efficient a way as possible. Development has been driven by a desire to innovate, to advance our engineering skills and understanding through building bigger, faster and cheaper, regardless of the developing environmental and societal inequalities such desires have created.

In the last few decades, the focus of transport professionals has moved to managing the ever-increasing demands on transport infrastructure – demands which have resulted in congested and pressured networks and poorer service offerings. Globally, against a backdrop of privatisation and market forces, constrained by increased regulation and standardisation by the state, infrastructure designers have become concerned with matters of organisational reputation, safety, comfort, satisfaction, convenience and accessibility.

Concerns about environmental impacts of transport and disproportionately large contribution of fossil fuel-based mobility on greenhouse gases has driven focus on sustainable, low carbon alternatives, mass transit and on-demand services incorporating greater technological innovation, recognition of the contribution of cheap, affordable transport to economic and social recovery. However, engineering and technological considerations still drive decision making. We are failing to recognize society’s infrastructure needs or understand the barriers preventing uptake, assuming viability and desirability based on pre-conceived, sometimes biased perceptions. The impact of these failings is a marginalisation of certain sectors of society. To overcome this designers need to understand the barriers to take up of smart and sustainable methods of transport globally and develop detailed understanding of what makes those methods viable and desirable. A core recommendation is the integration of human factors thinking into mobility considerations, from policy development to delivery and operation, driving cultural and behaviour changes amongst designers, prompting a change in focus and generation of accessible, intelligent solutions for all.
Public participation and digital innovation: Responsibility, inclusivity, and precaution in environmental decision-making

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Abstract

Digital technology is continuously transforming participatory approaches in research, policy, and practice. However, there are still many unresolved questions about the benefits of these technologies and their effectiveness at addressing the goals of participation. The COVID-19 pandemic has added urgency to the question of whether inclusive, representative, and meaningful participation can be conducted in online environments. While digital innovation can enhance participatory processes on one hand, there is significant potential for technology to cause exclusions, marginalisation, and other negative consequences for people and the environment. This paper contributes to debates around the use of technology for meeting the principles and criteria of participation in environmental decision-making processes. This paper reports on transdisciplinary and mixed-methods research conducted with practitioners in planning and environmental organisations in the UK public, private, and third sectors. This includes an online survey questionnaire (N=58) and in-depth interviews (N=39) conducted with practitioners in UK government departments, non-departmental public bodies, local authorities, not-for-profits, consultancies, and software companies. The findings provide insights into a comprehensive range of factors which influence the success of participatory processes. This includes the practical and ethical debates around representation, inclusivity, digital literacy, trust, bias, accountability, privacy, and anonymity. Challenging prevailing attitudes of ‘move fast and break things’ and ‘digital-by-default’, the findings provide insights and examples of best practice for making more informed choices of online, in-person, and hybrid methods to match different contexts. This supports calls for more proactive, precautionary, and responsible innovation in participatory decision-making at the science-policy interface and beyond.
Participatory research with marginal Indian farmers; Identifying post-harvesting challenges and developing affordable storage space.

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Abstract

Agriculture is the primary source of income for the majority of Indian families. Agriculture, together with fisheries and forestry, is one of the greatest contributions to GDP. Various crop output in India has expanded dramatically in recent decades. According to 2012 estimates, India is the world's second-largest producer of wheat, rice, and groundnuts, and the world's first producer of pulses. Although India's production situation is significantly improved, food waste is one of the key causes contributing to the unequal availability of food grains and their loss. At the local level, there are insufficient scientific storage facilities. There is a large gap between the agricultural output scenario and India's storage capacity. Because marginal farmers cannot afford storage facilities, there is an urgent need to improve individual storage capacity in a cost-effective manner. Participatory design research offers farmers a language or tools to conceive and communicate their needs and experiences. Taking Indigenous knowledge into account, a participatory study was conducted with marginal Indian farmers to get insight into their deeper needs and aspirations, which would help design affordable storage space for them. During the participatory workshop, farmers were divided into groups and instructed to design solutions for the problem in the form of mock-up models using the available materials. Farmers came up with various diverse solutions according to their needs. The participatory workshop with farmers helped acquire deep insights and understand the farmer's requirements. The workshop’s findings would help design affordable storage space for marginal Indian farmers, reducing post-harvest losses.
On the universality of dialectical analysis: Critical reflections from my East Asian research experience

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Abstract

Dialectical analysis has been widely adopted in research on Asian geographies, but critical reflections on its implications are rare. Specifically, it is unclear whether integrating three key aspects of a dialectical philosophical system – totality, contingency and contradiction – constitute an a priori universalisation that downplays place-specific characteristics. The paper will address this gap in two interrelated steps. First, it foregrounds how a dialectical method presupposes East Asian geographies as part of a bigger universal whole (totality) that are therefore subject to the internal logics of this whole (which determines contingencies and contradictions). Second, it demonstrates how this presupposed whole is itself contingent that could be ‘troubled’ and/or re-defined by the contingent and at times contradictory East Asian characteristics. These two steps collectively accentuate the value of a dialectical analytical approach to geographical research: it highlights how place-specific phenomena not only reflect the internal logics of a totality (e.g. capitalism, the global financial system, the global system of states), but also reveal the intrinsic limitations of these logics.
“Work” in urban mobility platforms: learning from “post-socialist” experiences in Tallinn, Estonia

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Abstract

Platform work is praised as a great job opportunity but has also led to multiple problems. These include difficulties for securing stable livelihoods and lack of social protection. This paper brings the “worker” perspective into urban mobility studies by reflecting on Estonian experiences in relation to wider Eastern European shifts. We raise questions about “post-socialist” specificities but also ask about lessons we can learn beyond the context these particular practices emerge. Namely, building from post-colonial critiques towards Western-centric studies, we bring forward ways to learn from the periphery. In this context, there are lessons about “digital future” and increasing urge for flexibility that would talk to many other contexts beyond Eastern Europe. The presentation builds from 40 in-depth interviews with platform workers in Tallinn, Estonia. We highlight discrepancies between, on the one hand, conditions for collective organising (including the existence of strong digital communities and the fact that that Estonia is generally a small country) and, on the other hand, the lack of collectivity resulting from language-based or ethnic segregation, mostly high payment from platform work in relation to general income level, non-existence of unifying problem narrative and weak workers’ identity. We also highlight differences of labour organising between urban mobility platforms noting the presence of stronger collective actions among ridehailing platform workers, especially by those with history in taxi driving, than among delivery couriers. Nevertheless, we highlight the strong existence of opportunism and individualism in such post-socialist conditions and reflect on the ways in which such sentiments are generalisable.
Community Landownership, New Entrant Land Access and Agroecological Transitions in Scotland

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Abstract

Over the last twenty years the Scottish Government has enacted a series of legislation to transform land rights, with the explicit aim of addressing the scale and concentration of landownership, which is understood to contribute to a lack of resilience in rural areas. A raft of measures has been introduced including a Community Right to Buy and reform to agricultural tenancies with the aim of stimulating the tenancy market. Consequently, there is a growing Community Landownership movement in Scotland with more than 400 community organisations owning land or assets.

This research project explores the agricultural activity undertaken by Community Landowners and the relationships between community landownership and new entrants to agroecology. Situated within Critical Political Ecology, the research explores the interface between assemblage theory and access theory in explaining how local agricultural systems are assembled with and by community landowners and other actors, and how different access strategies enacted by new entrants interact with these assemblages.

Current work includes analysis of findings from an online scoping survey benchmarking community landowners’ agricultural activity and perceptions, and presentation of field notes from fieldwork with community landowners and new entrants over the summer of 2022. The research methodology is based on Participatory Action Research and will use creative methods with community landowners and new entrants, including soil sampling and mapping. The researcher positioned within the research topic as a new entrant farmer and activist. Experiences of conducting participatory research with this positionality will also be presented including some of the challenges and strengths of this positionality.
The Politics of Deliberate Destabilisation for Sustainability Transitions

Laura van Oers, Giuseppe Feola, Ellen Moors, Hens Runhaar
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Abstract

This paper advances scholarship on deliberate destabilisation for sustainability transitions (e.g. Rosenbloom and Rinscheid 2020). Deliberate destabilisation as a governance strategy carries the assumption that the managed decline of unsustainable systems provides opportunities for alternatives to emerge. However, to understand how deliberate destabilisation plays out in practice, the politics of such processes must be confronted. We bridge research on the political economy of sustainability transitions with recent theorisations of the deliberate destabilisation of socio-technical regimes and propose a set of analytical dimensions and guiding questions for the study of the latter. We suggest how capitalist political economies shapes the rationale, process and outcome of deliberate destabilisation for sustainability transitions. The added value of our approach is demonstrated through the historical example of the phase-out of hen battery cages in the Netherlands. The poultry sector in the Netherlands embodies an industrial approach to food and farming, oriented towards producing large amounts of standardised and cheap food. Our research fosters new insights on the influence of intertwined political and economic interests for deliberate destabilisation processes, which may reproduce, rather than transform, unsustainable and unjust socio-technical regimes. The case of hen battery cages in the Netherlands shows how such incumbencies steered destabilisation processes towards a prolonged technology phase-out with manageable outcomes. Recognising the constraints and opportunities imposed by capitalist political economies will help avoid the risk of failure, delays or unintended side effects of deliberate destabilisation as a governance strategy for accelerated sustainability transitions.
Board games as tools to crowdsource reflections on carbon descent planning initiatives: A case study of Luxembourg

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Abstract

Today, one of the most pressing problems we are facing is climate change and the constant struggle to minimize our carbon consumption, emission, and dependence. It has become increasingly apparent that only through a series of systemic changes can prove to be effective in reducing our overly dependent carbon lifestyle. In this paper, we explore the role of board games as a tool for crowdsourcing reflections on local planning policies and initiatives that focus on reducing carbon consumption and emission for our case study area of Luxembourg.

The game, Carbonopolis: Letz bring it down! was designed to encourage intercultural dialogue and exchange on six climate change topics impacting Luxembourg: urban heat islands, extreme weather, quality of life, mobility, housing, and the food system (Jones and Becker 2022). We use a blend of gameplay inspired by the traditional snakes and ladders board game together with different types of event playing cards. Groups of players (2 to 5) alongside a game-master and game observer then interact with different forms of game content.

In this paper, we discuss the evaluation process of a series of playtests that were conducted in different spatial settings and at different times of the day. Using the collected observation data and post-test interviews we examine the role of the board game to support and crowdsource intercultural dialogues. We review a number of emerging themes such as how the game encourages an emotional response, leads to memorable discussions and topics, develops connections with existing understanding and knowledge, and leads to intercultural contemplative thought. We evaluate interpretations and reflections regarding the initiatives in reducing carbon dependency. Additionally, we consider how analogue board games can be designed and used to motivate people to contribute towards crowdsourcing in an intercultural setting.
Reducing coastal risk: implementation challenges of coastal set-back lines

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Abstract

Coastal areas are one of the most densely populated, with high development pressure resulting in increased exposure to risk, which is exacerbated by climate change projections. Therefore, management in these areas requires ongoing attention to ensure sustainable long-term planning and protection of coastal properties, infrastructure, and people. For many countries, this is founded within legislative frameworks, as is the case for the KwaZulu-Natal Province (east coast of South Africa). In South Africa national legislation requires the determination of coastal set-back lines; the determination of which is dependent of data inputs often captured at significant cost, with the resultant line being highly technical, modelled, and scientifically. This reliance on a technical approach is failing to capture local realities and leads to a disjunct when it comes to implementation and enforcement. Where Governments are faced with addressing a plethora of social needs, many of which out-weigh the need for ‘protection.’ Thus, practical management and planning for vulnerability needs to take consider more holistic, ecosystem-based approaches. Where understanding local realities, building in local knowledge and working with nature may render better ‘implemented’ protection then enforcing coastal set-back lines. Discussion as to how ecosystem-based approach could better address these challenges is welcomed.
Digitising air, commodifying nature: A critical take on the innovation of air purification

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Abstract

With dramatic effects on human and planetary health, the mutually dependent and constantly exacerbating climate and air pollution crisis have come to the centre of so-called green innovations—solutions that aim at reducing fine dust and hazardous gases in the atmosphere. As part of these, a number of ambient air purifiers have been developed with multifunctional uses and innovative, aesthetic designs which combine filtering abilities of moss and algae with high tech ventilation systems, sensors and bio-algorithms. By trying to mitigate the effects on a very local level instead of reducing emissions in the first place, these new products meet neither the actual planetary scale nor the roots of these two crises. Instead, they highlight how nature has received an increasing and commodified role in digital environments (see also Bruynseels 2020, Gabrys 2020, Moss et al. 2021). Embedding these new technologies in questions of responsible innovation on the one hand, and debates on the right to clean air on the other, this contribution will critically examine the conceptualisation of air purifiers as a technological fix as well as their actual effects. Thereby, I put an emphasis on the new relations that emerge between humans, technologies and nature, and critically investigate how these ambient air purifiers are marketised as (bio)technological innovations that promise to increase the city’s liveability.
Co-creating visions of complex urban heat systems

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Abstract

It is evident from recent studies and policy prescriptions that a successful energy transition in the UK will be contingent upon the successful implementation of place-based energy responses and equitable participation from local communities. Concurrently, energy systems are increasingly being conceptualised and modelled as complex systems – interconnected and interdependent on not just other technological and natural systems but also societal systems. As energy systems and their governance mechanisms are scaled downwards, the complexity only increases as societal networks, politics, behavioural, democratic, and equitable aspects demand attention. How can this complexity be understood for ensuring a just and inclusive energy transition that is both historically and geographically informed but also agile to future climatic and political uncertainties? How can this complexity be made accessible to policy makers, often falling short of capacities for navigating these radical changes? We propose that participatory methods of envisioning urban energy systems as complex system imaginaries and imageries can potentially address some of these challenges. Focussing on urban heat decarbonisation in the UK, this paper will present a literature review of participatory approaches to complex systems modelling, identify the gaps, and propose ideas and methods to co-create visions of complex urban energy systems with wide ranging urban energy stakeholders. The vision created will serve as the foundation for a larger project that aims to co-produce complex systems based frameworks, tools and models to help policymakers undertake long-term sustainable energy planning, contingent pathways, and resilient decisions that can facilitate decarbonisation as well as societal transformation of urban heat systems.
Acting back: The livelihood strategies of app-based food delivery drivers in Shanghai, China

Yu Feng
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Abstract

Empirical research has found that platform workers have adopted both collective actions and informal practices to address unfavourable working conditions. However, a disproportionate amount of attention has arguably been paid to the Global North in terms of geography, and to Uber drivers and remote workers in terms of research subject. This paper aims to broaden and deepen our understanding of resistance from platform workers, through a case study of app-based food delivery drivers in Shanghai, China. As responses to precarity, drivers have resorted to both open, collective actions and more hidden everyday practices. Because of surveillance by the Chinese state and the close managerial control of workers, collective protests have been rarely seen; more individual and quiet practices are favoured by drivers in their everyday resistance (e.g. transiting in different platforms and dissimulating data). During the economic downturn brought on by COVID-19, drivers could only survive by working with multiple platforms, working in fast-paced schemes promoted by platforms or migrating back to their rural hometowns. I argue that the intention to resist on the part of drivers echoes and expands Bayat’s (2000) observations on the survival techniques of the urban poor, rather than the ‘political act’ argued by Scott. The drivers’ short-term survival goals limit acquisition of skills, and further reinforce their reliance on platforms and their labour commodification in the workplace. It is hard to conclude that the drivers’ everyday resistance can provoke dramatic confrontation in China as Scott supposed.
Innovation in context: Cosmotechnics in the Anthropocene

Ben Hinder
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Abstract

Climate change, and environmental crises broadly, are not a threat to be avoided but constitute an unprecedented and permanent shift of the global system which social systems must adapt to (Campbell, McHugh and Ennis, 2018; Wakefield, 2018; IPCC, 2022). The frameworks which we apply to understand both these impacts and, crucially, to develop methodologies for mitigation and adaptation contain unspoken philosophies which feed into the path dependency of the system. For example, frameworks which draw on securitisation theory have long been criticized for their effect of legitimating authoritarian state action through crisis rhetoric (Aradau, 2004; Howell and Richter-Montpetit, 2019). Climate resilient development on the other hand posits that the mode of welfare improvement we have used so far needs to change if poorer countries are to reach higher standards of living (Fankhauser, 2016). These frameworks are used both explicitly and implicitly across discourses to contextualise innovation and social transformation, leading to divergent technological and social possibilities and precluding others. Understanding these different cosmotechnics (Hui, 2017) can help us to understand the futures we may be creating and allow us to inform political action more clearly and self critically by situating innovation within the cosmopolitics it emerges from (Stengers, 2005). Drawing on the anarchist concept of the unity of ends and means, this intervention wields a cosmotechnical understanding to push the audience to interrogate the political implications and cultural contexts of the technologies and practices they investigate in order to illuminate the ethics and ontologies they promote (Malatesta, 1920; Curran, 2007).
“Is Flexibility a Myth?” Analyzing the algorithmic management in food-delivery platforms in Dhaka city

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Abstract

Widespread advancements in communication technologies along with changing consumer patterns have dramatically transformed the world of work by engaging people and businesses for contract labor. The advent of app-based food delivery platforms, a recent addition to metro cities like Dhaka, is catering the fast-growing demands of the consumers. The apparent work ‘flexibility’ in these platform-based work attracts vast number of unemployed youths including students and this job colloquially known as “rider” to deliver food or grocery items is gaining popularity as part- or full-time job. The food delivery apps i.e., “Food Panda” or “HungryNaki” works as primary interface between the riders, app companies, restaurants, and the consumers – a non-human platform – that according to the riders seizing their sense of freedom and more limiting than having flexible part-time work they wished for. This paper aims to analyze how the ‘algorithmic management’ is used in these food-delivery platforms to distribute food orders to the riders, tracks, and controls strictly timed delivery deadlines, and how payment is made and as well as ranks the riders in the system based on their performances. The power distance between the platform companies and the riders allows these companies to exert control over workers’ freedom to bargain through implementing uninformed decisions. Drawing upon in-depth interviews and a survey with the riders, this paper presents how the riders in Dhaka are experiencing this new job, particularly focusing on two distinctive features of algorithmic management: information asymmetry and performance management system that work as disciplinary mechanism and its implications on the riders’ freedom to make choice and to bargain.
Beyond situated knowledges: “theorizing back” and making (Southern) theory work

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Abstract

This presentation reflects critically on the normative stance of theory building and epistemological practices in feminist and postcolonial geographies. Despite the widely acknowledged importance of recognizing one’s situatedness and positionality in geographical knowledge production, the development of reverse discourses in order to theorize back at situated knowledges emanating from Western Europe and North America remains a daunting epistemological challenge in Asian geographies. I argue that the recognition of situated knowledges is necessary but perhaps insufficient in theorizing back at and advancing social science understanding of complex socio-spatial worlds. Reflecting on my work in the co-development of the theory of global production networks, I explain how the key concept of “strategic coupling”, grounded in the transformative material realities of East Asia, has been conceived and deployed to theorize back at dominant conceptions of endogenous regional development in Western theories and to “speak back” to mainstream Anglo-American human geography. Pushing further this situated discourse of global economic geographies, I believe there are necessary reflexive steps for making the theory of global production networks work better, as a “Southern” theory, in explaining the recent “troubles” with global production networks, deglobalization, and decoupling during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.
The regional dimension of green skills for employment using EU-LFS data

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Abstract

Policymakers across the globe are trying to “green” economies, for example as part of the Green Deal in the European Union. Existing analyses on labour market impacts project net job growth of these green transitions, but they remain on the aggregate level. However, to avoid societal and political backlash to the transition, researchers and policymakers need to understand labour market impacts at a regional level including the skills composition, which is crucial to provide feasible job transitioning opportunities. In this paper, we use data from the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations framework (ESCO) combined with detailed regional labour market data from the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) to (a) map regional labour market impacts of the green transition and (b) develop a conceptual framework to analyse transitioning opportunities for negatively affected workers. We illustrate the share of green, brown, and neutral jobs by region based on the skill content of these jobs and calculate a metric for the ease of job transitions based on the skills overlap between different occupations. Preliminary findings show that the prevalence of brown, i.e., potentially distressed jobs, and the ease of transitioning out of these those, vary substantially across regions. Overall, transitioning to neutral or green jobs is likely more difficult for people employed in brown jobs. We show that targeted reskilling can ease job transitions and we present preliminary evidence that such reskilling can lower income losses during the transition.
Platformised work and workers as human ‘platform’. An approach to social digitalisation beyond technology

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Abstract

This contribution connects the new platformised delivery and gig work to the labour conditions and concomitant mobility of domestic servants in bourgeois households around 1900. There are some parallels between the former and today’s labour condition in service-work by which I show that the bourgeois household – alongside the industrial production in factories – introduced digitalized labour.

Though obviously without relying on digital technology, the domestic servants themselves were used here as a kind of human ‘platform’. Often consisting of migrants from rural areas and also having a lower status than their employers, in addition to gradually becoming heavily gendered, this workforce served as the essential backbone without which the bourgeois households were not be able to effectively run their intended sophisticated ‘privacy programme’. This is mirrored within the platform work today.

The intention of this contribution, however, is not to primarily point to these historical parallels, but to offer an explanation why today’s platformised delivery work could apparently be swiftly implemented despite its crucial impacts on the life of the workers. This explanation is completed by results of an empirical research (interviews) among gig workers on their individual approach to labour conditions.
Eco-innovation in mining: Can nature help us to mine more sustainably?

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Abstract

The circular economy (CE) concept advocates drastically reducing primary resource extraction in favour of re-using non-virgin material that has already entered the anthroposphere. However, in light of the ongoing ‘green transition’, the demand for certain critical raw materials has been increasing rapidly as ‘clean-technology’ solutions are significantly more material intensive than conventional fossil fuel-based solutions. This paper explores how, despite the need for increased raw material extraction, the mining sector can make a significant contribution in the transition towards the CE by replacing conventional technologies used in the mining industrial process with innovative eco-designs, such as nature-based technologies (NBTs) - industrial applications based on or inspired by nature. The paper presents the NBTs applicable to the mining industrial process which have shown promising evidence of significantly lower material and environmental impact than conventional technologies. It then explores why there has only been limited uptake of NBTs by large-scale mining companies to date. Connecting empirical evidence from interviews with mining industry actors with theoretical understandings from relational and environmental geography, as well as the CE and innovation studies literature, the paper identifies the existing gap in our understanding of the required processes to drive eco-innovation in the mining sector. The preliminary results of this study show that knowledge of eco-designs, such as NBTs, and willingness to employ them is increasing within the mining industry, but that a better understanding of the required organisational innovation system is necessary if firm innovation activities are to deliver more circular raw material extraction methods.
An analysis and options appraisal of England’s sustainability and climate change education strategy

Katie Wooldridge
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Abstract

The Department for Education (DfE) published ‘Sustainability and Climate Change: a draft strategy for the education & children’s services systems’ in November 2021, the final strategy is due to be published in April 2022. This paper comprises of two parts: firstly, a policy analysis of the strategy and secondly, an options appraisal assessing the potential response of UK education institutions to the strategy.

The policy analysis explores questions such as: what are the foundations of the DfE strategy; how does this relate to wider policies concerning sustainability/climate change/meeting net zero, in particular the UK’s 25-year Environment Plan; and, how this compares to other Nation’s education strategies? The options appraisal evaluates a range of possible pathways and delivery models that UK education institutions (schools, Further Education, Higher Education) might adopt in response to the strategy. Specifically, the paper will consider how Higher Education Institutions will respond: sustainability is to be embedded throughout teaching at Higher Education level, currently this is in its infancy and warrants further examination. The strategy proposes that Universities will play a vital role in the delivery of Higher Technical Qualifications at levels 4 & 5 and short course provision at Levels 4-6 to upskill and/or retrain. The paper will consider how these qualifications could be introduced on a national level and here Canterbury Christ Church University would be used as a case study. To conclude, the ability of this strategy to meet the ‘green skills gap’ will be evaluated.
Becoming agile: examining the centrality of moving quickly and easily to new geographies of labour, work and leisure

Justin Spinney
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

Mobility has always been entangled with work and labour: it has always been central to the work of moving goods and people to places and times at which they can be put to productive use. Historically this meant moving people to factories and offices and goods to markets: in this reading the means of production and consumption had more or less fixed geographical locations. The corollary of this was that when we were outside of these times and spaces, we were (more or less) at leisure and our activities were not subject to commodification or in service to labour. The advent of mobile communications is dramatically changing this. Increasingly, all sorts of practices that previously were bounded off as leisure, or were considered work for labour (Standing 2014) are being brought within the orbit of commodification and marketisation.

Forms of mobility that display ‘agility’ in their ability to transcend spatial and temporal fixity are over-represented in these transformations, most notably mobile ICTs and two wheeled variants including bikes, scooters, E-bikes and mopeds. In this paper I explore the idea of agility, and its centrality to ideas of fixing in economies where existing spatial and temporal distinctions and patterns are seen as barriers to efficiency; the emergence of new markets; and ultimately continued accumulation and extraction of surplus value. This paper seeks to develop the notion of ‘mobility fixing’ by focusing on the work required to produce labour with distinct qualities (precarious, low paid, dangerous, surveilled) in relation to ‘agile’ (virtual and physical) mobility platforms (small, unregulated, de-territorialised, prosumer, privatised) that come together to produce it as such.
From ‘zoom fatigue’ to walking intrigue.

Rik Fisher
None, Germany

Abstract

For Walking Publics/Walking Art, I entered descriptions of two of several online based projects I created and facilitated during the first year of Covid-19 restrictions within the UK. These addressed and raised many topics, but for this presentation I could focus on some of the apparent positives gained from running these projects at that specific time.

‘Play the game’ was a series of weekly sessions, each one inviting participants (UK, Netherlands, Germany) to play a specific games exploring their own geographical area in playful, creative and critical ways. We would then discuss our experiences and many varying topics around these in our weekly sessions. Feedback included people appreciating an excuse to do something creative and positive during intense and uncertain times. Despite ‘zoom fatigue’ people spoke about the excitement of reaching across geographical borders to connect with people in different places and different countries. Potential bringing a broader range of diverse experiences and locations, than maybe otherwise possible in a site-specific physical project.

I created and facilitated several online workshops and videos for a Neurodivergent young peoples charity based in Manchester. We created walking prompt tools (dice, chatterboxes) together to encourage playful walking approaches. Alongside this I created a number of video walking invitations that also demoed different walking approaches. I feel like a big positive of this project was that it brought young people together who were isolating. Also, that it encouraged neurodivergent young people to explore different approaches to exploring and expressing their own subjectivities and narratives.
On-demand, on-two wheels Geographies of food delivery drivers and their precarity

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Abstract

This paper shows how the precarity of food delivery labor and their two-wheeled mobility experiences amplify the vulnerability of gig workers in South Korea and its capital city Seoul. In recent years, the country has seen multiple fatal accidents of young delivery workers and it is estimated that 44% of workplace fatalities among young men aged between 18 and 24 happen during delivery, mainly while riding motorcycles. While there has been an active political debate on occupational safety concerning the algorithmic pressure of riders being on time, little is known to what extent the flexibility and maneuverability of two-wheelers contribute to and overlap with the informal and insecure status of gig workers. Therefore, this paper sheds light on riders’ use of motorcycles and their driving conditions, shaped by motorcycle’s less regulated and less protected status in the national law of South Korea. Content analysis shows how (risky) riding and associate accident rates are narrated in different documents including job descriptions, newspaper articles, and official reactions of the labor unions, employer companies, and the state from 2014 to current. Focusing on insurance issues where job security and traffic safety intersect, it shows how delivery workers in the gig economy remain largely uninsured, being uncounted in official statistics and refused by private insurance companies. Drawing on digital geography and mobility studies, particularly referring to Hill (2020)’s “trajectivity”, this paper’s analysis shows how two-wheeled Korean delivery workers are under ‘double precarity’.
Northern/Southern Theory and the State in Asian Political Geography

John Campbell
Lancaster University, UK

Abstract

This paper will discuss the relevance and usefulness of the terms ‘northern’ and ‘southern’ theory (Connell 2007) when considering democratic processes and the state in Asian political geography. Between 2014 and 2019, the Government of Maharashtra implemented a ‘Village Water Campaign’ with the promise to ‘end drought’ (Indian Express 2020). In researching how this policy came into existence and the knowledges, institutions, and technologies it employs (Zwarteveen 2021), my research draws on western critical theory directly, and indirectly through South Asian scholars such as Nikhil Anand (2017), Partha Chatterjee (1983) and Veena Das (1995). This paper will argue that given the dialogue between theories and theorists in the global north and South Asia over many decades, the discipline of human geography being a western academic construct, and the nature of the post-colonial state in India, this approach in political geography is both unavoidable and necessary. This will be shown with reference to my own research, where democratic theory from ‘northern’ academic discourse can contribute to critiques of Indian democracy given its constitution as a secular republic committed to ‘universal’ liberal ideals (Indian Constitution 1950); it is these values and processes that contribute to the state’s legitimacy and shape its role in environmental governance (Das 1995). Looking to pragmatic philosophy (Rorty 1991), I will conclude by arguing that the social theory employed by scholars, whatever its origin, should be judged on its usefulness in bringing about social change given the ideological commitments of critical political geographers and ecologists. While part of the process, acknowledging one’s situated knowledge is not sufficient to comprise ‘theorising back’ nor creating ethical research.
More than responsive: alternative temporalities of student support

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Abstract

"the key temporal features of responsiveness result from... systemic scarcity of time" (Goetz, 2014, p.385)

As academics with student-support administrative roles, the covid-19 pandemic pushed our daily practice into a temporality of “responsiveness”. By this we mean that our practice was not one in which we had time or capacity to imagine better ways of teaching, of designing modules, or of supporting students; rather, we were pushed into simply responding to the latest crisis, occurrence, or concern, mitigating damage or anticipating complaints, rather than producing something novel. Yet reflecting over a longer-term, we have been in responsive mode to a series of other ‘slow emergencies’ (precarity, marketization, governmental focus on metrics, racial and gendered inequalities in the academy) that have been operating over a longer time. This paper first reflects on how those responsive temporalities have emerged gradually in response to slow emergencies, and then rapidly in response to covid-19. We then finish with a series of alternative temporalities of student support, and identify examples as to how these uchronic temporalities can be found tentatively embedded in moments of our current academic practice.
Young people, uncertain future and just transitions for decarbonisation in Indonesia’s ruined forest frontier

Rini Astuti
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Abstract

This paper examines the barriers and opportunities associated with young people’s role and aspirations in realising just and inclusive decarbonisation in the context of rapidly changing Indonesian agricultural and forestry sector. In Indonesia, ecological damage caused by agribusiness expansion has rendered many forest frontier regions heavily degraded and burned. This has been the leading cause of toxic episodes of transboundary haze and carbon emissions in Southeast Asia. Industrial firms are not the only key actors, local farmers are increasingly entangled in the making of these anthropogenic pressures. Smallholder producers now account for 40% of Indonesia’s palm oil commodity output and contribute to a significant portion of the environmental impacts from that sector. This paper draws from critical resource geography and political ecology scholarships. We will do so by asking questions like: Whose interests are served by decarbonization program in Indonesia? Whose knowledge are privileged, and who is being included and excluded in decision making and conservation activities? We will particularly be interested in understanding the role and aspirations of young people in governing decarbonisation in the agriculture and forest sector. Young people need to acquire education, skills, and knowledge as they engage newly emerging social and economic pursuits in the rapidly degrading forestscapes. Yet few studies have examined young people’s role and aspirations and how they imagine their futures in times of climate uncertainty. Even less attention is given to how young people come to view themselves in agriculture and food production system, the sector most associated with anthropogenic pressure to forest carbon landscapes.
Using Virtual Species Simulation for Habitat Conservation in Urban Rivers

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Abstract

Predicting endangered rare species’ spatial distribution is limited due to its low prevalence and insufficient distribution data. This data insufficiency is known as a serious obstacle to apply species distribution model (SDM) for habitat conservation and landscape management. Simulation based researches, such as virtual species simulation, are attracting attention as an effective alternative to solving the above problems and are expanding their scope in Ecology and Biogeography study. The aim of this study is to propose how virtual species simulation could be used for exploratory modeling analysis, suggesting various possible scenarios depends on species ecological niche. The study focuses on two endangered species from a fluvial system in South Korea, which is sensitive to local landscape structure and physical habitat. To set hypothetical species response to environment gradient, we fitted SDM with long term field surveyed data from 15 sites, located along with barrages. Presence-only SDM algorithm (Maximum entropy) and virtual species simulation were applied to set different models to compare. The differences and their effectiveness were measured in all models with cross-validation and various parameters. As a result, virtual species simulation is found to be useful to support limited observation of rare species and helpful to calibrate model with high uncertainty. This method proposes the possibility of virtual species simulation application to discover unknown information and model calibration method for predicting rare species spatial distribution. This also suggests that virtual species simulation research could be a promising remedy to explain the gap between complex predicting model with less interpretability and known occurrence-environment relationship.
Public Data in the Marketplace: Commercializing Big Urban Data from Indian Cities

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Abstract

The India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX) platform was launched in 2019 to collect data from cities under India’s Smart Cities Mission and National Urban Digital Mission. The platform functions as a data exchange and data marketplace – it acquires data from city infrastructure through APIs, and shares this data with city administrators, researchers, industry experts and urban solution vendors. The IUDX is also touted to be a “data marketplace” in the future.

In this paper I trace how publicly sourced urban data is being made available for commercial solutions through the IUDX. At the national level, I detail how the IUDX acquires and aggregates data from cities, and makes it available to stakeholders through its technical architecture. At the city level, I use a specific case study of Bhubaneshwar Smart City to understand the challenges faced by cities in integrating data with the IUDX and accessing data for analytics. I also look at local institutional and procedural factors that influence the data practices of the city and this integration. I also look at use cases by industry of this data.

While IUDX functions in the absence of any data regulation laws in the country, industry standards and non-binding data policies (e.g. masking of personal information) are used to regulate data sharing practices. I use policy and design documents, interviews with IUDX leaders and developers, interviews with smart city administrators, and case studies of data access and analysis by private firms. In this paper I argue that data acquired by public institutions and via public funding is being made available to firms to enable a privatization of urban services. I also show how the IUDX plans to overcome current challenges to data acquisition through its technical design and city-level interventions.
The use of shared bicycles by instant meal delivery workers in Paris

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Abstract

Since 2015, platform-based instant on-demand meal delivery has gained momentum in large cities, mainly taken on by self-employed workers, who often face precarious working conditions. When working for companies such as Uber Eats or Deliveroo, workers must get their own equipment and vehicle. Emerging research on this new labor market has mainly focused on delivery workers’ profile, working conditions or labor solidarities. The type of vehicles used by delivery workers remains little studied, although it has a strong impact on these workers’ daily activity and, more broadly, on urban mobility.

In this paper, we explore delivery riders’ mobility practices and equipment in Paris, where platform-based instant delivery is very developed. We focus on the use of shared bicycles by delivery workers, especially Vélib’, Paris’ public bikesharing offer. Results of a survey reveal that, in Paris, most delivery riders use two-wheeled vehicles: 36% use a motorized two-wheeler (moped) and 46% a bicycle, 39% of whom use a Vélib’. Profile and motivations of delivery riders using a Vélib’ are studied, as well as the impact of this professional use of the public bikes haring system Vélib’. On the one hand, given its low cost-in-use, Vélib’ offers a valuable resource for precarious gig workers who might not be able to purchase their own e-bike or as a temporary solution for those who have not bought their vehicle yet or whose personal device has been stolen or needs to be fixed. Note that, in the summer of 2021, between the two editions of the survey, Vélib’ contract terms and pricing changed, prohibiting delivery and preventing sequential use of the bicycles (numerous short rides by the same user), typical of delivery riders’ use of the service). On the other hand, Vélib’ is a public bike sharing service initially intended to offer a sustainable mobility option to Parisians for their daily trips, and not for commercial purposes. The use of this service by delivery workers therefore diverts its use and puts a stress on the service, raising policy issues and questioning the status of gig workers.
Green jobs, working-class environmentalism, and socially responsible production: The Green Bans and the Lucas Plan

Ed Atkins
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Abstract

The promise of ‘good, green jobs’ has provided an important narrative in numerous governments’ plans to address regional inequalities and create new opportunities for local economies and livelihoods. In many cases, this overlaps with policies that pledge to mitigate the consequences of previous processes of uneven development and economic restructuring, such as those bought by deindustrialisation. However, the promise of green jobs is not necessarily materialising as it should. With net-zero agendas and populist culture ways, there remains a need to further illuminate – and elevate – the transformative potential of green jobs for the working-class communities. There also remains a significant and overlapping need to further link net-zero action and contemporary environmentalism to working-class communities, giving them a stake in a low-carbon future.

With working-class communities often either left out of climate action or seen as a brake upon it, this paper will detail two important cases from the 1970s of the actions of workers (and work) that pursued a ‘just transition’ from the ground-up. First, it will present the Green Bans in New South Wales, Australia as an instructive example of working-class environmentalism. Second, it will explore the socially-responsible production presented by the workers at Lucas Aerospace in the UK. Whilst these examples are by no means new or emergent, both are examples of how workers hold influence at key sites and points of industries that pollute and emit. In looking back to these examples, this paper presents current bottom-up green jobs agendas as an opportunity to not only influence energy transitions but to also give oft-overlooked communities an opportunity of new livelihoods and futures.
Differentiated bodies: Mobile street workers, intersectional precarities, and rights-work in Mexico City

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Abstract

There are ostensibly 50 thousand app delivery workers in Mexico, but there are close to 300 thousand street workers in Mexico City alone, many of which have to be mobile to sell, display, deliver, and meet the demand for their goods and services. The commonalities between platform workers and mobile street vendors extend beyond the use of cycles; they share multiple, intersectional states of precarity, many if which have vern exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. But more saliently, they are regarded as lesser, disposable bodies that are managed to ensure the relative safety, health, and hypermobilities of the elites.

Much attention has been given to the labour inequalities of the expanding gig economy. Many of its insights should be applied to informal street worker cultures that are deemed as "escape valves" for social and economic crisis.

My contribution to the discussion around plataformised work looks to expand the purview of mobile labour past conventional notions of delivery work, and beyond the employ of delivery-specific apps like Rappi and UberEats. First, I argue that mobile street workers are also reduced to highly restricted and commodified bodies, albeit monitored by different forms of very visible authorities, instead of the "invisible" app employers. And second, I propose that the plataformization of mobile work also emerges as a form of resistance by labour rights activists and workers themselves: communication apps such as Whatsapp and Twitter have recently been used in Mexico City to organize disparate groups that were previously scattered and individualized.
Young people’s engagements with heritage in ‘left behind’ places

Bozena Sojka, Joshua Blamire, James Rees, Rob Elkington
University of Wolverhampton, UK

Abstract

There is a well-established body of knowledge regarding the benefits of arts-related activities and themes of personal development, skills, identity, belonging, social inclusion, social cohesion, and positive health and wellbeing of young people. Meanwhile, much less is known about the precise contribution of heritage to observing these outcomes in young people (as compared to, for instance, simply participating in organised activities such as sports). Moreover, the proclaimed benefits are also rarely brought into conversation with key policy hooks such as social and cultural capital, social cohesion and social polarisation, inequality and, more recently, ‘left behind’ places and the Levelling Up agenda. Drawing on research conducted for and on behalf of Historic England, this paper explores young people’s engagements with heritage in ‘left behind’ places and seeks to address the question of how can heritage programmes for young people be used as a tool for the revitalization of declining places? We answer this research question by showcasing the experiences, perspectives and voices of young people engaged in heritage programmes themselves. Our focus is on a number of informal, place-based case studies that address the notion of heritage through the lens of identity, belonging and sense of place, as well as social inclusion and health and wellbeing.
Governing the COVID-19 Pandemic in England: Reflections from Two Local Authorities

Joshua Blamire, Bozena Sojka, James Rees
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Abstract

Over the past two years, the devastating scale and severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged every aspect of how we live our lives, exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and created new and unprecedented demands on public services. This paper explores how local authorities in two different districts in England have managed the pandemic; in the North West (Milltown) and in the West Midlands (Metaltown). These formerly industrial places both suffer entrenched multiple deprivation and record multiple poor socio-economic and health outcomes. They are also culturally and ethnically diverse boroughs. Milltown and Metaltown have both also been hit hard by COVID-19. Meanwhile, both are recognised as disadvantaged, or so-called ‘left behind’ places, through the UK Government’s ‘Levelling Up’ agenda.

We utilise over 60 in-depth semi-structured interviews with the key strategic actors involved in both of the responses. In this paper, we show how, in England, local responses to COVID-19 have entailed multi-agency action with local councils working alongside various local partners – such as emergency services, health groups, education, transport and housing organisations, private enterprise, and the wider community and voluntary sector – in order to manage these challenges and to mitigate the impact on residents. We compare the key place-based factors which facilitated this partnership-working, through which collective place-based work emerged. We also illustrate how the pandemic responses variously involved mobilising diverse communities in fundamentally new ways (such as, in the case of Milltown, developing a ‘social movement’) through which new local alliances formed. This paper then considers the various opportunities and challenges associated with different place-based responses to COVID-19, as well as the broader possibilities for urban governance into the future. These lessons will be vital given the need to reduce place-based inequalities set against the ongoing challenges associated with fiscal retrenchment, Brexit, climate change, and the longer-term impacts of the pandemic.
Social perceptions of wildfire in Great Britain; case studies of impressions, awareness and risk perception of uncontrolled vegetation fires.

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Abstract

Wildfires present relatively new risk to the Great British environment and society that is still quite poorly recognised by the general public. They now put significant pressure on Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), as well as the environmental institutions responsible for our vegetated landscapes (e.g., NRW and Forestry Commission). Response costs alone were estimated to be £55 million annually, even more in drought years, with significant further costs to rural industries and for post-fire remediation (1,2). FRS vegetation fire incident data gives an average of 32 000 fires occurring annually in England (3), and between 2000 and 4000 in recent years in South Wales (4). Both changes in upland management and climate are contributing to increased risk of occurrence and severity and, as the country is not fire-prone, policy makers, stakeholders and the public are not necessarily prepared for the risks. As the country experiences sharp increases in both fire occurrence and area burned over the last few fire seasons (2), the perception of this risk remains under explored in Great Britain. My research project is taking-up this baton and aims to discover the impressions residents have of local wildfire and gauge the level of risk the public attribute to this ‘quasi-natural disaster’. As wildfire expression is highly contextual, this project has adopted a case study approach across three locations; South Wales Valleys; Dorset, England; and a region (TBC) in Scotland. It utilised survey data to cover themes of: fire perceptions, fire knowledge, and attitudes towards fire management. Besides outlining the current ‘state-of-play’, a key element of the research is to engage with stakeholders dealing with fire issues and aims to acquaint them with up-to-date public perceptions.

References:


Stories from Oceania: children learning about climate change through empathy

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Abstract

The UK school curriculum largely avoids the climate crisis or addresses it only within a specific subject, such as science or geography. The challenges of everyday life for children in parts of the world severely affected by the rapidly changing climate are seldom included. Our own and others’ previous research indicates that children are curious about climate change (Satchwell 2013; 2016) and become less anxious when they feel agentic in facing its effects (Rousell et al 2019; Hickman 2021).

Our project presents a holistic approach to understanding social and emotional impacts as well as the science of climate change, instigated by children themselves. The project begins with the exchange of stories between children in Oceania and children from a range of ethnicities in NW England. Multimodal exchanges via video, email and written letters allow relationships to be built between individual children who ask one another questions about their lives. These questions themselves reveal the priorities of the children and what they need to know in order to come to terms with the broader crisis. The power of stories to provoke empathy (Satchwell et al 2020; Jarvis and Gouthro 2019) provides a means of including children in understanding the impact on human lives and allowing their voices to be amplified in the debate about what happens next. The findings will be used to inform schools and policy-makers about the urgent need to include children’s perspectives on the climate crisis in educational and community contexts.

This paper reports on the initial findings and implications of this project.
Sensing Wales: Conflicting identities and belonging of young ethnic minority people in Wales

Jami Abramson
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Abstract

According to Welsh Government data, 4.9% of the population in Wales do not describe themselves as White-British[1]. Behind this statistic, there is a diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and migratory experiences. Despite this, the heterogeneity of ethnic minority individuals is often overlooked by educational, cultural and media discourses which often assume a one-dimensional and homogenised view, using the umbrella term ‘BAME’. In particular, many young people are choosing to reject singular and homogenised categories such as ‘BAME’[2], as their identifications often exceed bounded, well-established political categories such as identity and citizenship. Even so, such processes of categorisation are still sensed and experienced by these young people, often resulting in social exclusion, racism and discrimination[3].

Following ‘Black Lives Matter’ (BLM) protests in recent years, young people are actively calling for greater race equality in Wales. As a result, Welsh Government have proposed their vision for “an anti-racist Wales by 2030”[4]. In this context, I would present alternative approaches to challenge bounded conceptualisations of identity and citizenship, needed to positively represent the multiple experiences of ethnic minority young people growing up in Wales. Deleuze and Guattari’s metaphorical concept of Rhizome offers multiple entry points to understand ethnic minority young people’s identifications as hybrid, multiple and an assemblage of changeable elements.[5] In addition, I would share my intended methodological approach, participatory action research (PAR), utilising creative visual methods.


‘Never far from home: falling in love with the hyperlocal’

Sonia Overall
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Abstract

Walking during a national lockdown means walking the hyperlocal. Once-a-day walking to the end of the road and back. Short bursts of activity along the same streets and footpaths.

My experience of walking during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly through lockdowns, has been one of attending to, and falling in love with, the hyperlocal. In this paper I explore how the limitations of localised walking created a deeper entanglement with my neighbourhood on three, interconnecting levels:

- the personal - walking alone, mapping memories, reinventing recreational sites
- the communal - walking with others through remote projects, use and neglect, access and barriers
- the non-human - micro-changes and patterns in flora and fauna, seasonal awareness.

I will consider how the potentially mundane and tedious daily walk has encouraged a subtle evolution in my thinking about familiar places and spaces, and in response, the emergence of sustainable walking methods that seek to re-vision place.
Good work in the cargo bike sector

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Abstract

A growing body of evidence highlights the potential of cargo bikes to efficiently replace delivery vans in cities, therefore decarbonising urban freight, enhancing public health, and reclaiming public space for people. Most research on cargo bike deliveries focuses on their environmental and economic benefits, while omitting the experiences of sector workers (e.g. cycling experiences; issues around road safety, work & pay, labour process). Inadequate cycling infrastructure, precarious work and the lack of gender and ethnic diversity in the cargo bike sector can create a hostile work environment.

While recent research has started unpacking the experiences and resistance strategies of platform delivery cyclists, there has been less attention on the specificity of cargo bike deliveries as a sector where novel complexities emerge in relation to the materialities of the cargo bike and its presence on the road, as well as sector-specific practices in terms of work contracts and set-ups for companies that use cargo bikes for deliveries. Cargo bikes are larger, heavier and more difficult to both manoeuvre and repair than standard and electric cycles. They require wider cycle lanes, more space for parking and turning and battery charging points. Because they can carry more weight for longer distances, riding and loading/unloading a cargo bike can be more physically demanding and require more skills and training.

Our paper presents preliminary findings and recommendations from a study of working conditions in London’s cargo bike sector. It offers recommendations to improve rider safety, accounting for the material configuration of cargo bikes and the required infrastructure changes, and the organisational structures to ensure good, green job growth in the sector.
(Im)mobilities in the age of instant deliveries. Exploring the hypermobile lives of precarious gig workers

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Abstract

Historically, mobilities studies have largely associated urban movement with social mobility, using metaphors such as ‘access’ and ‘motility’ to implicitly equate highly dynamic lifestyles with acquiring mobility and network capitals. At the same time, e-commerce and, more recently, the advent of platform delivery services are warranting an investigation of the role that software-driven (im)mobilities play in complicating this dichotomy. The extraordinary capacity of code and algorithms to dictate how urban mobilities are undertaken today has significantly impacted on how power is redistributed amongst (im)mobile bodies, and what are the consequences of this. Significantly, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, itself a result of a hypermobile globalised world, has laid bare in a dramatic way the privileges associated with being able to keep safe by remaining immobile. At the same time, mobility and the resulting body proximity to significant others, at least at the small urban scale, has become particularly dangerous amongst those ‘essential’ mobile workers for whom being mobile is often non-negotiable. This presentation unpacks the ways in which the algorithmically managed mobilities of delivery workers contracted by companies such as Deliveroo, Uber Eats and Just Eat are essential to sustain the immobilities of an urban world relegated to the intermittent lockdown conditions of the last year and a half. Using ethnographic data drawn from research undertaken alongside platform food couriers in Manchester, UK, this paper aims to shed light on how the data-driven (im)mobility of platform food couriers and their respective customers is effectively negotiated, contested and resisted.
Grit Walks 2021-22

Dan Dubowitz
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Abstract

During the pandemic the city fell silent. At the same time, a city-scale regeneration began in Mayfield, a post-industrial area of Manchester including the first public park for over 100 years. Now we are faced not only with the reawakening of the city but also what that city is.

This paper investigates the production of new knowledges and narratives created through acts of walking through Mayfield during the pandemic. Not only are we reconnecting with space but those spaces are also changed by the pandemic.

Firstly, there are new places to walk through because the character of these places has changed. Secondly, the kinds of people walking through these places has also changed. This paper, presented through field notes and audio recordings reveals how people and places are co-producing new species of spaces: the actual city is changing because of the pandemic.
The Sensory Experience of People’s Park Protests, 1967 to 1975

Kera Lovell
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Abstract

Beginning in the late 1960s, activist groups across the United States began protesting by taking over vacant lots and converting them illegally into public parks they often called People’s Parks. Described as “liberated zones,” People’s Parks included a range of activities dependent upon the interests of their activist creators, from gardens and shared meals to live music and sleeping encampments. Analyzing this pattern of protest requires examining these parks as emotive processes rather than simply sites of political organizing, and the act of protest as corporeal rather than merely political. Park creators designed these green spaces as sensory-driven and politically symbolic narratives that aimed to link nationalist discourses of urban progress with white western imperialism during the Vietnam War era. Witness accounts often describe park creations as holistic sensory experiences that park goers characterized as more authentic, more sensual, and more fulfilling than those imagined as defining mainstream America. Laboring to create these parks required your entire body. Some participants described the train of workers laying sod as an intimate dance. Hogs roasted on site created a smoky atmosphere while collectively-created stews had to be eaten on mismatched paper plates with your hands. Campfire meals, combined with drum circles, shared wine jugs, and exploratory dancing transformed parks into imagined frontiers for “playing Indian” (Deloria 1998). Celebrating the heightened sensory experience of constructing these parks also meant that park goers collectively grieved the forced closure of these parks as metaphorical deaths that have shaped the historical memory of this movement.
Reunion and Separation in the Kuzhazha Festival—Cultural Anthropological Perspectives on the Conservation and Development of the Hani Terraces

Tianyu Zhao
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Abstract

Terraces as a cultural landscape deserve a more in-depth multifunctional assessment. The conservation of terraces is of great importance in preserving the uniqueness and adaptability of cultures and in telling the history of human symbiosis with nature. This study will observe and record the Hani's unique festival Kuzhazha, which is closely linked to the production of the terraces. Today, more and more Hani people are choosing to leave the terraces and embrace urban life. However, it is the festival that still exists today, allowing those who have moved away from the terraces to return to their villages for a few days of the familiar village life that they once enjoyed. During the festival, the village comes alive, people interact with the terraces in various ways and the terraced society returns to its former prosperity. After the festival, people leave the village. Between the reunion and separation of people, there is an invisible cultural drive that can draw people back into contact with the terraces. This cultural drive is the collective memory of the terraced society. The preservation and development of the terraces require the preservation of a vernacular civilisation that corresponds to the urban culture, the link between the present and the past, and the collective memory of those who share the same lineage of agricultural production and life.
China as method: Methodological and tactical experiments for a more global urban studies

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Abstract

China’s remarkable urbanisation has brought about a commensurate surge in academic interest. Yet the field continues to be dominated by two trends of exceptionalist theorising: first, urban China is framed as an exceptional variant of inherited Western models such as neoliberalism; and second, urban China is taken to be its own source and destination of theorization, where urbanisation practices take state entrepreneurialism as an ultimate frame of reference. Such cultures of theorization are a wasted opportunity for ‘theorising back and better’, given how the emergent properties of Chinese urbanisation present rich cases for an engaged pluralism in urban studies. As such, we develop a provisional ‘China as method’ based on two methodological reformulations: ‘thinking cities through elsewhere’ and conjunctural analysis. This opens space for mid-level theorization, which has potential to contribute to the revision of existing theoretical frameworks and/or create new starting points for analysis and conceptualization between urban China and a wider range of cities and contexts. Based on this methodological reformulation, we propose three tactics for mid-level conceptualization with urban China cases. The first involves generating concepts through bespoke comparisons between cases in urban China and elsewhere based on their shared features. The second involves conceptualising from a single urban China case by placing two (seemingly incommensurable) theoretical frameworks into conversation. The third involves launching concepts developed from inductive research in urban China and developing novel analytical frameworks.
Social and Behavioural Responses to Clean Water Supply Systems in Rural Areas of Mid Ganga Plains, India

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Abstract

The fertile, densely populated Mid Ganga Plains depend on groundwater aquifers as sustainable sources of water for direct and indirect human consumption. Excessive withdrawal of groundwater, changing weather patterns, siltation of channel flows and water bodies, and other anthropogenic activities are leading to imbalances in the globally accepted limits of physics-chemical parameters of groundwater being utilised, of special significance being high arsenic content. Arsenic intake over 10 ppb to 50 ppb result in cancer and is genotoxic in human beings. Remedial measures to ensure clean water supply, having no or negligible levels of arsenic have been undertaken by both government and private stakeholders. The objective of this study was to make a rapid assessment these remedial measures and their sustainability in context of the unique social structure and community behavioural responses in eastern state of Bihar. The need for user-friendly and cost-effective scientific and technological innovations was examined through questionnaires and field interviews and by testing of arsenic content in water samples collected from hand pumps and taps in the study area. Geotagging of water sources was done for further monitoring. Economic aspects, social inclusivity vs stratification, ingrained cultural mindsets and gender issues were identified as determinants of sustainability or failure of proven technologies for obtaining clean water. The results observed will assist in validation of a "Green Technology" tool proposed in the larger ambit of this multi-disciplinary study that will assist bore well diggers in identifying arsenic-safe aquifers, and thereby reduce community health costs.
Post-industrial Pollination: bees and their hidden animal geographies

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Abstract

It would be disingenuous to claim bees are one of ‘Geography’s hidden animals’. Their iconic status sees VisitManchester.com proudly boast: ‘those sweetest and busiest of insects are everywhere. Even in the depths of winter they are here, on every bollard and bench, on buildings and bins all over our city’. We argue though, that beyond an anthropomorphic working-class symbolism, they suffer from ‘hidden animal geographies’ – especially when we consider their conscription as environmental workers (Zhang 2020) on urban rooftops. Used as part of environment and sustainability plans, their labour – and the labour of beekeepers – is often hidden. We know that bees play a key role in planetary ecosystems, yet incomprehensibly we have seen the UK government reverse a ban on bee-killing neonicotinoids.

Building on geographical scholarship regarding brownfield sites (Lorimer 2008) and urban ecologies (Oliver et al 2021), this project deploys a Participatory Action Research approach to democratise ecological knowledge production. It does so by centring non-elite environmentalists working to foster more equitable multispecies urban futures. Through this project we see the engagement of young men who are regularly excluded from conservation conversations. The project builds awareness and knowledge of bees as environmental workers, by engaging young fathers with researchers and artists. Together, we co-create cultural social-action projects to raise public awareness of urban beekeeping and to call for more equitable multispecies cities in this time of climate emergency. This project advances social and environmental justice among an underrepresented group and understandings of urban ecologies in post-industrial landscapes.
Community enterprises, community assets and processes of urban regeneration and gentrification in tumultuous times

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Abstract

There is a longstanding debate regarding the potential role of community organisations in urban regeneration, with literature often cautioning of the constraints community-based efforts can face due to structural inequalities and their impacts, including gentrification. These constraints have arguably been further exacerbated in the context of austerity, increasing inequalities and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This paper focuses specifically on community enterprises (CEs) and contributes to a gap in knowledge regarding the role of CEs, and particularly the community assets that they own or manage, within processes of regeneration and gentrification in the UK. The paper is based on findings from doctoral research (2016-2020) which involved scoping interviews with policy/practice experts and in-depth qualitative case study research with two CEs, one in Bristol and one in Glasgow; and follow-on research, currently underway, involving a wider survey of CEs and a workshop and interviews with policy/practice experts. It thus aims to consider both how the approach of these organisations to regeneration, via their community assets, can limit, reflect or even exacerbate gentrification in socioeconomically unequal neighbourhoods; and also the impact of recent societal changes, including responses to the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union, on these organisations and the role of their community assets in regeneration. In doing so, the paper contributes to academic, policy and practice debate regarding how more socially just community-led regeneration might be better achieved, while gentrification and its negative impacts are limited, considering what is required for a sustainable, socially-just recovery from recent crises that enables community-based efforts to maximise their potential role within regeneration. The paper contributes a ‘community asset-focussed analysis of gentrification,’ using the community assets owned or managed by CEs as a lens to better understand the interrelations and nuances between regeneration and gentrification.
Creating a green state, but how? Justice, sustainability, and young people in Vietnam’s green transition

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Abstract

As the drive towards low-carbon economies continues in many parts of the world, questions have arisen as to how such transitions are to be managed. While environmental sustainability often tops political and academic discourses, the concept of environmental sustainability also privileges a technocratic approach, while bottom-up approaches and alternative knowledge claims are frequently delegitimised. Indeed, there is increasing concern that environmental sustainability ignores questions of environmental justice. This applies also to young people, who are often vocal supporters of climate change policies, yet have very little access to decision-making processes and their skills, actions and knowledges recognised.

These disconnects are also visible in Vietnam, which has a large, young population that critically observes Vietnam’s low carbon transition and the greening of the policy framework. In the ecologically fragile Mekong Delta, youth-led environmental organisations and an emerging group of youth-led organic farms are proliferating. This increasing, and often creative activity, is however, disconnected from official structures. As a consequence, young people’s climate activities are mostly short-term, small scale, and of limited impact. A government report on youth and climate change observed that young people lacked “skill sets, access to technology, financial sustainability and cooperation with stakeholders, which has led to a lack of systematic, comprehensive and effective projects” (Department of Climate Change and UNDP 2021: 10).

Drawing on insights from environmental justice, green state theories, and political ecology, we explore the spaces that young people carve out for themselves in Vietnam’s low carbon transition. Using the Vietnamese Mekong River Delta as a case study, we contribute to i) a deeper understanding of Vietnam’s transition to climate resilience and ii) the growing literature on the role of young people in climate action. We are particularly interested in how young people relate to a changing environment, and how living in increasingly marginal landscapes may influence young people’s choices with regards to their future.
Ground spent hens, sustainable contradictions, and industrial metabolic flows

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Abstract

Changing patterns of human consumption are reconfiguring the Earth’s geology and biosphere and the broiler chicken has been proposed as a distinct new morphospecies signal: emblematic of the Anthropocene era. With a population of over 22 billion, the rate at which chicken carcasses are accumulating is unprecedented in the natural world. This waste problem associated with chicken carcasses has inspired efforts to develop methods for utilising post-productive hens.

Slowed-down laying hens pose a big problem to the egg industry. Too sinewy to be made into meat, and with “negligible” commercial value, chickens are a by-product of the egg industry (despite this usually being framed the opposite way around). At about eighteen months old, these birds become waste. They are then euthanised, ground up, and turned into hen meal, cheap human baby food, reconstituted chicken products like chicken nuggets, or commercial pet food. However, new utilisations of chickens’ post-productive bodies are beginning to emerge, most notably as a sustainable biomass source to produce fuels.

In this paper, I seek out these hidden hens, finding them in industrial metabolic flows as well as in emerging “sustainable” applications, making visible their exploitation.
The relations between social and spatial mobility: understanding heterogeneity of occupational trajectories in geographical local contexts over five decades (1971-2011)

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Abstract

Studies testing Tony Fielding’s (1992) hypothesis on “escalator effects” have tended to emphasise the social mobility ‘premium’ of movers into affluent or agglomerating local economies. However, recent migration literature has underlined the role of social selection in residential migration, and geographical inequalities, in chances of career advancement within a country. Inspired by this literature, the chief focus of this research was expanding and updating the theories of ‘escalator effect’ in internal migration. In particular, this paper brings innovation in analysing more complex occupational trajectories, interrogating their individual and area-level correlates, and following a longer time period than previous research. Drawing on the census-based ONS-Longitudinal Study for England and Wales, we examined upward, downward and stable trajectories of social and spatial mobility across five decades (1971-2011), and their variation across city-regions. The longitudinal approach enables reflection on how the relationship between spatial and social mobility has changed amidst globalisation and re-urbanisation processes that have shifted occupational structures and career advancement opportunities in local/regional labour markets. We bring about the intersection between place-space and individual attributes in understanding heterogeneity of occupational trajectories in geographical local contexts, and adding further refinement into the discussion on elevator and escalator effects.
Cultural organisations and the ‘quiet politics of belonging’: the case of young asylum seekers and refugees in Newcastle-Gateshead, UK

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Abstract

This paper explores the ‘quiet politics of belonging’ cultivated through artistic, sporting and other cultural organisations in Newcastle-Gateshead, in the north-east of England (Askins, 2015). Asylum seekers and refugees attending these kinds of organisations build confidence, trust and a sense of belonging by ‘doing together’. Involvement in these activities is significant for the well-being of many refugees and asylum seekers, alleviating the isolation they can face whilst offering them the chance to ‘get away from things for a bit’, distracting them from the stress and anxiety associated with their asylum claims. At the same time, however, these artistic and cultural organisations often combine artistic activities with more ‘critical’ forms of care helping attendees with translations, bureaucratic form filling, financial support and so on. Thus, we argue that these artistic and cultural organisations serve multiple purposes, providing a range of services and care that span the social, creative, educational, practical and emotional. It is, we contend, the constant and everyday bordering practices of the UK’s asylum system that demands, and is constitutive of, these kinds of multiple purpose spaces, that are simultaneously an escape from, and reminder of, protracted asylum claims.
Right-wing populism and the #costofnetzero

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Abstract

The emergence and consolidation of populist political movements have important consequences for renewable energy transitions – opposing infrastructure, denying climate science, or linking it to broader antagonisms in society. The character of populist projects can change, absorbing new demands and grievances and linking them together into new narratives, policies, and forms of opposition. This paper explores how right-wing populist politicians and commentators have linked net-zero policies to a cost-of-living crisis in the UK, characterising decarbonisation as an undemocratic pursuit, and affirming the need to accelerate policies that enable the fracking of natural gas. The potential proliferation of these narratives poses a challenge, with net-zero policies being further pulled into broader political debates. However, such narratives also demonstrate important complexities of net-zero policies in the UK, which may enable decarbonisation to gain a different popular appeal – being linked to government ‘levelling up’ agendas and broader policies of ‘green’ job creation. To date, this remains a missed opportunity.
Squalid Natures: navigating the hidden animal geographies of domestic pest infestation

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Abstract

Houses in the UK are frequently home to an assortment of unwanted companions, including rats, mice, bed bugs and wasps. Despite dreams of purification and control, pests continue to be present and proliferate. Domestic infestations wreak economic damage and trigger psychological distress, but their impacts are unevenly felt. While costly for some, infestations are lucrative for others. The multi-billion-dollar pest control industry is integral to public health and mired in everyday animal death and suffering, yet this ‘dirty work’ is academically overlooked. Combining experiences of domestic infestations during the pandemic with ethnographic encounters with professional pest controllers in the UK, this research unveils the hidden geographies of ordinary, uncharismatic animals that are intimately and undesirably entangled in everyday human worlds.

I investigate the processes through which these geographies are hidden: both how they are rendered architecturally inaccessible and shamefully concealed, but also how professional pest control is hidden from scholarly accounts and largely academically disdained as a mode of natural history knowledge and embodied expertise. Pandemic lockdowns have reconfigured both human and animal geographies of work and dwelling (for instance sending humans out of offices while rats scurry into them). Consequently, processes of recovery must grapple with questions of social justice alongside competing and precarious nonhuman claims to space. Yet I also contest any easy relationship between enhanced visibility and increasing human-animal conviviality. I posit the ethical dilemmas posed by pest exterminations and removals as a potential limit to how welcoming, lively, and flourishing people desire their homes to be.
Hidden and hiding: Elusive animals in the Korean Demilitarised Zone

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Abstract

The Korean demilitarised zone (DMZ) has traditionally been understood as an alienated borderland consistent with ideas of no-man’s lands as abandoned and enclosed spaces (Leshem and Pinkerton, 2016). However, far from being an empty space or geopolitical vacuum, the withdrawal of human bodies and activity from the DMZ has (inadvertently) established an ecological haven where non-human life thrives (Healy, 2007). The myriad species which inhabit this space are essentially hidden, obscured by the barbed wire fences and fortifications which surround them and simultaneously overshadowed by the geopolitical tensions which necessitate the division.

Positioned within the burgeoning body of work which embraces animals as key agents within geopolitical practices (Whatmore, 2002; Hobson, 2007; Sundberg, 2010), this article highlights the role that hidden animals play in constructions of the DMZ, as well as within inter-Korean dialogues. Focusing on three species intimately tied to the space, the Red-crowned crane, the Siberian Tiger, and the Long-tailed goral, the article emphasises the differences in value assigned to each species and consequently, the amount of agency and ‘geopower’ they possess (Hodgetts and Lorimer, 2018). In relation to this, it explores the distinctions between those animals which are hidden from view due to the inaccessibility of the space, those which are ignored on account of their uncharismatic qualities, and those which are purported to be ‘hiding’ within, despite a lack of evidence. Cognizant of the uncertain future of the DMZ, the article concludes with a consideration of how ‘revealing’ hidden animals might impact upon potential Korean reunification.
East and west: concepts of state, capital and market in water management

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Abstract

Our concepts and theories are products of our history, constrained but not determined by natural laws. Such are the concepts of state, capital and market and the theories that tie these concepts together. In this paper we illustrate the localisation of these concepts and theories by contrasting the relations between state, capital and market within an occidental society (Australia) and an oriental society (China) within the specific sector of water management. Though uncommon in the literature of economic geography, water management is in fact vital to the economic development of both societies because of perceptions that it is in relatively short supply, exacerbated by extreme fluctuations and wide geographical differences in volume. Deluded by the apparent similarities in conditions of supply and by the universalising assumptions of occidental theories, commentators and consultants from Australia and similar societies (such as the western USA) have consistently provided advice to Chinese governments that is unfit for the understandings of state, capital and market that circulate in China. Armed with this case study of the development of a specifically oriental conception of the interaction of state, capital and markets in water management, we go on to argue that the inappropriateness of policies predicated on occidental theories provides empirical grounds for disputing the universalising tendencies of those theories.
Wolves and ‘clueless’ shepherd dogs in populist Hungary: Nationalism and the ontoepistemic loss in the countryside.

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Abstract

Based on my ethnographic research, this presentation addresses a niche segment of Hungarian nationalism, namely the beliefs and knowledges about different dog breeds used to fight the re-appearing wolves around cattle and flocks. Approaching the choices dog owners make as a specific form of posthumanism mobilised in nationalism, I argue that these choices are statements about belonging, self-positioning, and identity which comes together with a lack of experience how to successfully fight the wolves. Using Blaser’s notion on the ontological conflict and basing on Central Eastern European decolonial authors like Koobak and Marling, I claim that the beliefs and myths about the effective ways to protect the cattle, together with stories about ‘clueless dogs’ who do not know what a wolf is and how to fight it, are manifestations of a certain rural ontoepistemic loss. As my data shows, one of the most important factors local farmers look for when choosing dogs are the breed and the origin or place of upbringing of individual dogs. The ideal breeds, considered the most capable and knowledgable of protecting the cattle, come from Central Asia (Central Asian Shepherds) or Turkey (Kangals). Many of the famers, and the information sources they use when making decisions about the dog breeds, claim that ‘no good ever came from the west’ and they have to turn to their true origin, the east, to have the right kind of a dog. There is also an intriguing ambivalence regarding the rejection of ‘ancient’ Hungarian guard-shepherd dogs, like the Komondor or the Kuvasz, who are claimed to be too westernised and over-bred using wrong, western type, institutionalised standards.
Everyday (trans)nationalism and (non)belonging - generational perspectives on the connection to physical and symbolic places.

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Abstract

This PhD project builds on existing research problematising the ‘singular national’ in work on everyday nationalism, to explore how the national can be articulated in a plurality of registers (Antonsich 2017; Antonsich and Matejskova 2015; Erdal 2019; Hearn and Antonsich 2018).

Focusing on transnational families with a migrant background in Stockholm, Sweden, this project aims to explore how the (trans)national is negotiated in everyday relations, with a particular focus on the family. Looking at multiple generations, the research examines how the national(s) present in a family show up in everyday encounters and interactions, exploring how the national(s) are negotiated and navigated in conversation. Of particular interest is how the relation to the national(s) vary across generations, and how they are communicated, understood and experienced between generations (grandparents, parents, youth). Through exploring narratives of childhoods and belonging to places, the project will ground data collection in both individual life-narratives with different generations, and multi-generation family interviews exploring the different relations to symbolic and physical places.

The research is in its initial design stage, and this paper will explore how the transnational can be theorised in relation to a framework of banal/everyday nationalism (Antonsich 2017; Billig 1995; Erdal 2019; Fox 2017; Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008; Fox and Van Finderachter 2018, Hearn and Antonsich 2018; Matejskova and Antonsich 2015, Mavroudi and Holt 2021). It will further look at how meaning-making within family units can best be explored in relation to the negotiation and (re)production of the national(s).
Disappeared ID Number, Concealed Lives—Unveiling the Hidden Whereabouts of Race Horse in Japan

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Abstract

From the production of military horse to race horse, the history of horse commodification in Japan has been closely intertwined with imperial forces and state power. With the experience of the First Sino-Japanese War, the empire discerned the dire need of military horse. In order to embark on horse production within the nation, ticket selling for horse racing was approved. This state earning then became the main financial source for military horse production. After WWII, the state repurposed the already efficient infrastructure of horse production from military equipment to economic assets. Racecourse were built, and production facilities were expanded with the establishment of training facilities and slaughterhouses. As this new chain of infrastructure emerged, horse racing grew into the most popular form of state-approved gambling. Nowadays, the state-founded Japan Racing Association oversees the production of thoroughbred horse in Japan, while the profits remain state income. Every year, around 7000 horses are produced while 5000 horses are “retired” due to injury or underperformance. The lucky ones are purchased to start a “second career” in riding clubs, resort farms and other sightseeing facilities, while the rest are sent to the meat planet—no more than 6000 horses in the nation are currently registered under a riding club. In other words, most of retired horses become meat horse.

This paper aims to explore the ways in which the life of individual race horse is concealed by the state. Through various mechanisms, the whereabouts of individual horse became untraceable after retirement. For example, the registered ID number of the horse is deleted permanently before its retirement auction, which provides no further mean to trace the horse. By examining the origin of the practice and its effect on the industry, this paper hopes to raise awareness among horse race participants in Japan and foster changes within through shedding light on this exploitative mechanism.
Unstoppable Blue Tears: Multispecies Entanglements as a Border Infrastructure in the Matsu Islands

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Abstract
Located off the southeast coast of China, while the islands of Matsu are very close to China, they belong to Taiwan and have long been considered a remote edge. However, the emergence of “Blue Tears” in recent years has transformed these peripheral islands. In the spring, abundant rainfall washes silicates from the continent into the ocean, causing the bloom of diatoms near Matsu Islands, which in turn leads to the proliferation of Noctiluca scintillans, a type of algae-eating bioluminescent plankton. When these tiny creatures were disturbed and thus emitted fluorescent light, poetic people glimpse the tears of the sea. This paper attempts to understand how Blue Tears, an encounter of humans, materials, and multiple species, transformed Matsu from a marginal borderland into a fantastic and intimate wonderland. I try to conceptualize the systemic force that does not stop with the fading of blue tears, that continues to operate in the background, and the distinctions it makes between inside/outside and self/other, in terms of "border infrastructure". I observed that the light of tears made the islanders to see and recognize their own place, not merely a periphery in the eyes of the others.
Beyond displacement - Conceptualising large-scale resettlement schemes as a reterritorialization process

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Abstract

Resettlement schemes are a prevalent feature of urban development in the Global South and thus far have been conceptualized as a variegated form of displacement characterised by their large-scale and taking place within a short timeframe. Such conceptualisation originates from critical research on displacement in the Global North which is driven by an accumulation by dispossession logic (Elliott-Cooper et al., 2020; Ghertner, 2014; Hamnett, 2020; Slater, 2009; Xu, 2020). I attempt to reinterpret resettlement as a two-stage process involving both the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of residents (Wang, 2022). Reterritorialization refers to whether and how resettled residents are able to regain a sense of control and belonging over the new space they inhabit and to rebuild a sense of community with fellow residents. The research draws on the case of a relocation settlement in Shanghai and finds that the Chinese state is heavily involved in reterritorializing residents because it needs to consolidate its influence at the grassroots level and address the practical necessity of assisting tens of millions of resettled residents who lack access to essential amenities and services. The state uses a mechanism I call ‘state-led community building’ in its attempt to reterritorialize residents in a way that also renders residents more governable for the state. By interpreting China’s resettlement schemes as a two part process, I argue that displacement should not be the only framework to conceptualise the various forms of resettlements in the Global South and their impacts on the livelihood of resettled residents.
Singing-Stories of Seeking and Sanctuary: Creative spaces to negotiate belonging, recover and flourish.

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Abstract

Young people who have experience of going through asylum process in the UK navigate an increasingly complex and hostile terrain. They not only carry with them traumatic memories of loss, separation, and displacement, but they are also exposed to everyday exclusions, microaggressions and extended periods of uncertainty due to lengthy bureaucratic legal procedures and restrictive immigration and asylum policies. These aggressive state tactics make the experience of asylum more difficult and traumatic and young refugees and asylum seekers often experience periods of disorientation, social isolation, and insecurity.

‘Mongrel UK, Music Theatre that Bites’, brought together young people from refugee, migrant and settled communities in the North of England Region between 2006 and 2013 to co-create music and theatre that was performed to audiences in the North of England region. The project was part of Sage Gateshead’s Youth and Community Programme in partnership with the North of England Refugee Service. This paper considers how community music and theatre projects can provide young refugees and asylum seekers creative spaces to recover and flourish. It is based on reflective interviews with Mongrel UK participants; music and theatre practitioners who work with migrant communities including ourselves as coordinators of the Mongrel UK project. This research indicates that co-creative singing-youth theatre practice can create valuable spaces where young people with diverse lived experienced can construct powerful counter-narratives and build strong intercultural bonds which can contribute to developing a sense of belonging.
The hidden animal in human drugs: geographies of heparin production and circulation

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Abstract

Nonhuman animal matter has been historically used to produce drugs, in a more or less transformed manner, across geographical and cultural contexts. Over the last century, synthetic chemistry then biotechnology have progressively reduced the uses of animals as a primary source of matter for drug production. However, this evolution, magnified by a linear narrative of biomedical progress and innovation moving away from remedies of the past, must be nuanced to account for the hidden persistence of animal matter in biomedicine. Today, heparin-based drugs, which are essential anticoagulants, are still manufactured using by-products of industrial pig farming, and beef to a lesser extent. The consumption of the centenary heparin has been steadily increasing, reaching levels that require the yearly processing of hundreds of millions of pork’ intestines. Furthermore, heparin is also used in test tubes for a range of laboratory analyses, aptly illustrating how animals might be hidden in routine infrastructures of biomedicine. From Chinese farms or Iowa ranches to French or Indian factories, from slaughterhouses to hospitals, from pigs to nurses and patients, the standardized uses of animal-based heparin as drug or reagent encapsulate a host of various actors and relations. This paper traces the growingly complex contemporary geographies of heparin production and consumption between North and South, to show how human biomedicine remains dependent on the uses of animal matter, and at a scale binding pharmaceutical production to the industrial exploitation of animal life.
From climate denial(ism) to climate co-option

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Abstract

With this presentation I will attempt to tackle the gradual and all the more salient shift from climate denial(ism) to climate co-option. To this purpose, I will start by thinking through the paradigm of the foundation of the ministry for “Climate Crisis and Civil Protection” in 2019 by the current neoliberal, right-wing Greek government and particularly the thesis of the Greek Prime Minister, when he commented publicly lastsummer that the immense fires that had outbroken in many parts of the country, were substantially related to climate change, although there was certain evidence proving that these were arsons. Taking into consideration that some areas where fires outbroke were areas of conservation and special protection, for which a specific legislation had been voted earlier last year for smooth development, I want to problematise, on a first level, the ways in which “climate change” is used as an alibi. On a second level, I want to think critically the material and discursive ramifications of climate change discourse and its focus on crisis and disaster, taking especially into consideration the current centrality of “adaptation” and “resilience.” Drawing particularly on Brian Massumi’s theorisation of preemption, I will attempt to elaborate the relationship between this temporality of uncertainty, futurity as the time-form of threat, and neoconservatism. Eventually, I will conclude that today climate change is addressed in a completely post-political way by an inter/national environmental governance, which is rather conducive to market-oriented solutions, like carbon markets, weather derivatives and catastrophe bonds, which far from being actual solutions, treat the climate as an object for speculation.
Contested territories and the new dependency: rethinking peripheral urbanization in and from Latin America

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Abstract

Based on a critical assessment of the hegemony of postcolonial urbanism in contemporary urban theory, in this paper we set out to develop ‘peripheral urbanization’ as an integrated concept and research program that is able to overcome the still existing binaries of urban/rural, global/everyday or capital/agency through a territorial perspective on urbanization. Specifically, we focus on theory production from Latin America where ‘peripheral urbanization’ as a conceptual notion for approaching (urban) space production is rooted both in dependency theories and urban anthropology which, in our view, makes it particularly apt as a boundary concept for bringing into dialogue the perspectives of neo-Marxist urban political economy and post-colonial urbanism in global urban studies. In this paper, then, we reconstruct the evolution of peripheral urbanization, from its conceptualization as dependent urbanization in dependency and world-systems theories between the 1960 and 1980s, and its reframing as autoconstruction-based city building in (mainly) urban anthropology in the late 2010s. We identify the main elements of both approaches, detect strengths and weaknesses and point out some of the epistemological and methodological premises that an expanded and decolonial notion of peripheral urbanization must need to fulfill in order to serve as basis for a systematic dialogue of the often sharply opposed theoretical positionalities of urban political economy and postcolonial urbanism in studying territorial contestation. Finally, we propose some provisional lines of future research combining readings of different theoretical traditions such as the super-exploitation of labour, neo-extractivism, urban citizenship, territorial contestation and everyday violence in the context of a new financialized dependency in Latin America.
Between the local and global: the multi-scalar geographies of Naga indigenous self-determination and peace and reconciliation.

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Abstract

This paper explores how actors at the state's margins are re-fashioning discourses of global indigeneity to articulate local demands for self-determination and peace and reconciliation. Indigeniety is gaining increasing leverage in the political and public sphere as a conceptual tool, a claims making device, and as a cultural, legal, and juridical category (Karlsson and Subba 2006; Merlan, 2009). Yet, such discourses are far from static, and are appropriated and re-negotiated in a variety of local and national contexts (Nyhan 2021; Uddin 2019). This paper considers the case of the Indo-Naga conflict. Located at the margins of the Indian state, Nagaland has experienced continuous geopolitical uncertainty since Naga nationalist groups declared independence in August 1947. A protracted peace process between the Government of India and the Nagas has continued to falter, in part due to the demands of Naga political groups for the unification of Naga inhabited areas across state and international borders. Who should be recognised as Naga is contested; as is how to demarcate the territorial extent of Naga areas (Baruah, 2003; Kikon, 2015). Drawing on archival research and interviews with members of Naga political and civil society groups, this paper explores how members of Naga civil society are seeking to overcome this impasse through engaging with discourses of global indigeneity at a range of scales. On the one hand, through invoking the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Naga activist groups speaking in international forums are able to advocate for the integration of Naga inhabited areas across borders whilst sidestepping the thorny issue of state sovereignty and territorial integrity. On the other hand, drawing on these global discourses also allows Naga groups to mobilise an embodied, local indigenous identity which transcends inter-tribal differences to achieve reconciliation whilst bypassing the need for state recognition.
Arthur Machen’s Hill of Dreams and the Spatial Hinge

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Abstract

Arthur Machen’s semi-autobiographical novel The Hill of Dreams (1907) follows a young man who spent his childhood in Wales and now lives in late-Victorian London. This paper takes the latter text and uses the ‘spatial hinge’ concept (Thurgill, 2021) to explore how wandering the ever-expanding neighbourhoods of 1890s London evokes everyday moods (Highmore, 2011) in Caerleon, the actual birthplace of Machen, as post-war private housing estates were taking shape. My work takes an assemblage approach (Anderson, 2015) including close reading, historic maps, biographical interviews, and a collaboration with a performance artist to compose a Hill of Dreams-inspired public walk for the 2019 Caerleon Literary Festival. Text was shared during the walking event, such as Machen describing the metropolis’ edgelands as: ‘everywhere the ruins of the country, the tracks where sweet lanes had been, gangrened stumps of trees, the relics of hedges...’ (2006, p. 168). Such words, experienced in a suburban location, prompted people to recall the 1960s when woodlands and lapwing habitats were displaced by bricks and tarmac. This use of a fictional text in a real place works towards ‘interspatiality’ (Hones, forthcoming); revealing that which is more-than-representational and giving valuable insight to the subjective and affective dimensions of space.

Bibliography


Contested mountain environmental futures? Institutional populist infrastructures and environmentalist networks in the Dolomites

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Abstract

Over the last few years the contemporary context of the global environmental and climate crisis on the one hand, and the pandemic on the other, has strengthened the institutional debate on sustainable environmental futures and the need to boost energy transition and green recovery policies. Scholars in critical environmental geographies and political ecology have recently highlighted the controversial nature of these projects and related visions and discourses as well as issues of uneven power relations and communities exclusion. However, few attention has been paid on these processes in mountain environments which represent complex socio-ecological natures today characterized by contested trajectories of infrastructural development and capital valorization on the one hand, and visions of conservation and protection on the other. Therefore, by adopting a political ecology perspective and the conservation framework, this contribution aims to reflect on the contested environmental futures of the Dolomites, in north-eastern Italy, through the analysis of institutional populist infrastructural development projects and the struggle of grassroots environmentalist networks. With regard to methods, research combines social research with institutional policy and discourse analysis. These infrastructural development projects, supported by regional institutions together with a variety of powerful private actors, are legitimized by the support of the green national recovery fund and a significant emphasis on green and sustainable mountain futures. In parallel, the projects have been contested by an heterogeneous environmentalist network who denounces their controversial unsustainable green nature and a top-down approach in policy-making by highlighting alternative conservation visions for the environmental futures of the Dolomites.
Problematising Coal Tips: A New Welsh Risk?

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Abstract

The issue of coal tips safety has remerged in Wales following a landslide in Tylorstown, South Wales, during Storm Dennis in February 2020, sparking concerns around the likelihood of further landslides across the country both in communities and at government level. Welsh coal tips have many potentially unique characteristics - their locations, complications over ownership and associated responsibilities, and connections to past national tragedies such as the Aberfan tip slide in 1966. These factors suggest the issue of coal tips has a specific Welsh dimension not found in other locations.

The approach of grappling with coal tips safety in Wales to date has been dominated by physical or regulatory methods; through increased or innovated monitoring systems and a Law Commission consultation (2021) to modernise the regulations for a post-industrial and devolved context. However, there is a lack of cultural and community understanding of the coal tips and the risks the communities perceive from them. This should be addressed to ensure the management of the coal tips does not increase fears or exacerbate tensions that are already emerging once again. This PhD research aims to address this imbalance through qualitative methods to explore communities’ understandings and relationships with a potentially hazardous feature of their landscape and the climate change narratives this could invoke.
Contested gardens - Tensions in two Latin American cities

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Abstract

Agricultural practices have always been present in our cities. However, the number of people interested in these practices has declined due to the emergence of globalization, in general, and agriculture and food globalization in particular, which tends to marginalize and destroy local production systems. Several authors argue that these practices reappear in response to socioeconomic crisis, especially in areas where the population has low income or resources are scarce. Other studies point out that crises are not a sine qua non condition for this because urban gardens do not exclusively have productive purposes. From this last position, our group studies the functions, discourses and logics associated with how agents from diverse origins, interests and modes of action participate in agricultural practices.

In this presentation, going through the concept of territory and under the ethnographic approach, we outline some ideas that will serve as input to analyze different types of consensus and disputes in the appropriation of spaces with agricultural practices in two Latin-American cities, Buenos Aires and Bogota. The richness of these experiences lies in the fact that the places mentioned here no longer exist today: both gardens were deactivated due to several disagreements between the multiple actors involved (participants, authorities, occasional helpers and volunteers, etc.). We find this topic interesting as it provides a lot information and helps understand how subaltern social groups experience territories in their social situations that are marked by inequality. In particular, we are interested in analyzing how power manifests itself in resistance movements and thus address some aspects of the complex network in which the dispute over the urban model is inserted, which traverses at least through two logics. On one hand, the common practice of developing infrastructure only for populations with vast economic power, which tend to accumulate capital in neoliberal contexts at the cost of the territorial displacement. On the other hand, the creation of new urban geographies understood as a common good where all those who produce them have the right to inhabit.
Torn Apart! An East Asian Researcher’s Geopolitical Positionality and Mental Health in (pre-) COVID-19 times

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Abstract

This article examines the ‘geopolitical positionality’ of an East Asian geographer caught between hostile countries (home/field). I am a US-trained cultural and political geographer conducting fieldwork in South Korea and Japan. I define geopolitical positionality as the researchers’ position influenced by international politics, discourses, and practices by core powers and hegemonic states. By revisiting my fieldwork experiences, I interrogate how my geopolitical positionality has a great impact on the knowledge production process of an East Asian researcher and my mental well-being amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In the era of global trade wars, the geopolitical positionality of researchers requires more scholarly attention; however, a focus on this geopolitical positionality remains practically nonexistent in human geography. This article works to fill this void by reflecting on my fieldwork experiences in the geopolitical tensions between South Korea and Japan. By sharing my vulnerabilities and hardships concerning my fieldwork prior to and during the COVID-19 crisis, I aim to accomplish two goals. First, by showing the vulnerability of an East Asian feminist researcher who is caught between hostile countries (home/field), I examine how the study of the fieldwork of East Asian researchers can enable the production of the relatively new concept such as ‘geopolitical positionality.’ Second, with my analysis of geopolitical positionality, I demonstrate that contemporary East Asian knowledge is precariously produced across imaginary and material boundaries between the personal, the academic, the national, and the geopolitical.
Mapping, Enchantment and the Spatial Hinge in Philip Weller’s The Dartmoor of The Hound of the Baskervilles

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Abstract

Literary geography continues to develop lenses of increasing theoretical sophistication, through which we can see reading’s power to produce an ontological flattening of word and world in action (see Bratt 2016, Ridanpää 2018). One recent theoretical offering is the spatial hinge, ‘the affective mechanism at work in the relationship between reader, text and place’ (Thurgill 2021). In this paper I propose to build on these theoretical developments by focusing on literary mappings, as a means of seeing readers’ experiences of the spatial hinge in action. Literary mappings are often more than representations: they are expressive, creative and affective practices (see Luchetta and Ridanpää 2019). In the hands of lay readers, literary mappings have affective agency, they can tell stories, they can be catalysts of personal and worldly change.

In this paper I offer a reading of a literary mapping of Dartmoor produced by Sherlockian fan Philip Weller; a mapping made within the context of the Sherlockian ‘Game’ to align actual and fictional times and places in one flat ontology. By reading this mapping through the lens of enchantment, theorised as an unexpected affective shift in one’s present conscious state, I suggest that it can help us to better see one example of the spatial hinge, that affective, creative moment when fictional and actual worlds bump up against each other, in action. By attending to the fleeting nature of enchantment, and the feeling of being both in and out of place it engenders, I show in Weller’s Dartmoor mapping the affective force of fictional encounters and the role that literary mapping itself plays in enhancing and directing that force.
Broadening the scope and impact of engaged scholarship for impactful place-based research

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Abstract

In the domain of participatory methodological approaches to research, engaged scholarship is heralded by many academics in a variety of fields (business and organisation studies, area and policy studies, geography, sociology, etc) as an ideal research approach to obtain understandings of complex problems in a particular context, deploying multiple processes of knowledge production and co-creation between academics, people, and places in order to understand and provide transformative solutions to real-life, ‘wicked problems’. Engaged scholarship’s applicability and suitability to address contemporary issues such as sustainable development challenges and examine the roles of practitioners and communities from spatial and temporal lenses warranties the method’s significance as a praxis-focused approach to research.
A global movement making a difference locally? The role of Fridays for Future in shaping climate policy in German cities

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Abstract

The global climate movement Fridays for Future (FFF) movement spread throughout the world during 2019, with millions of young people getting involved in school strikes and protests to raise awareness of climate change. Although much of this activity was put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic, the movement contributed towards hundreds of regional and local governments declaring a ‘climate emergency’ in 2019 and 2020, particularly in Germany and Italy. Given the conditions in which they arose, there is a risk that such declarations may be largely performative or symbolic and not result in substantive policy change. However, drawing on municipal policy documents and interviews with FFF activists, government officials and elected representatives in seventeen German municipalities, we show how the movement has become highly integrated into decision-making in various cities and is having a significant impact on policy. Pressure from FFF has led to municipalities adopting more stringent greenhouse gas reduction targets, employing more staff to try and achieve these targets, and – even in places that have not declared a climate emergency – the development of more ambitious sustainability and climate strategies.
The Legends of Tōno: Literary Geography, Folklore, Interspatiality

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Abstract

Yanagita Kunio’s Tōno monogatari (The Legends of Tōno) is a compilation of one hundred and nineteen folktales, ghost stories, customs, and festival chants from Tōno, a collection of mountain villages located in the northeast of Japan. Considered the first work of Japanese folklore studies, Tōno monogatari was published in 1910 following a field trip Yanagita had made to the region in the previous year. Each of the stories describes spatial encounters with and imaginings of place specific to the Tōno area. The literary geographical significance of Yanagita’s work is suggested by the narration of the tales, which mirrors the way in which the stories were understood by the people who told and shared the folktales at the time Yanagita was documenting them. Thus, Tōno monogatari reflects lived encounters with the literary-geographical setting(s) of Tōno’s folklore which are indistinguishable from events taking place in the space of the narratives.

Yanagita makes no attempt to separate fact from fiction: Tōno monogatari questions, blurs and crosses the perceived boundaries commonly understood to exist between literary and actual-world, the lived and the imagined. The indivisibility of literary/actual-world space present in Yanagita’s writing emphasises the ways in which folkloric narratives depend on an ‘interspatiality’ rather than a division between the real and imagined (Hones 2022). This paper examines the interspatiality of Tōno monogatari, highlighting the specific ways in which folktales operate geographically and enabling a better understanding of the affective spatial encounters performed and generated within, between and beyond individual texts and the places emerging, imagined, and/or (re)presented within them.

Social Isolation and healing of internally displaced people in Nigeria

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Abstract

This presentation will explore the ways that the stories portraying the values and knowledges of elders can be a form of healing and action for social justice. These stories are essential for the youth living in camps who have little or no memory of their ‘place’ language or voice.

The presentation is based on a project, Decolonising Education for Peace in Africa, with research being conducted in New Kuchinguro, IDP camp in Abuja, Nigeria. The camp is home to 1,320 people who fled from their villages due to Boko Haram attacks. Spearheaded by a local NGO PADEAP, University of Abuja, Coventry University and the Open University UK. The project seeks to build connections between practitioners, researchers and camp residents. It created space for elders to come together and share stories they want to keep alive, as well as values and knowledge of social cohesion, harmony and peace. The elders then participated in the transformation of these stories into educational materials.

Incorporating these stories of peace into learning materials provides the opportunity for youths to connect with their indigenous knowledge system. Often projects around youth engagement in post-conflict societies overlook the ways that prior generational symbiosis has been severed, leading to social and cultural alienation, which can then compound the trauma of displacement. By drawing on the knowledge of the elders, this presentation makes the case that inter-generational engagement is crucial to preserving indigenous knowledge and identity, which potentially will lead to a greater sense of belonging and healing.
Adapting to adaptation: Stakeholders’ views of responses to the impacts of seawater desalination

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Abstract

Climate change projections indicate an increasing need for adaptation. However, adaptation is not inherently positive and might result in various adverse effects. Although such effects are increasingly recognized, adaptation is still largely viewed and analyzed as an end point, with limited attention to the responses required to ameliorate its negative consequences. To address this gap, this study builds on the concept of ‘second-order adaptation’ to examine how responses to the impacts of seawater desalination in Israel, a highly desalination-dependent country, are perceived by a range of stakeholders. Such impacts affect coastal systems, the atmosphere and human health, among other effects. Stakeholders’ perceptions are elicited via a combination of closed and open interview questions, which enable us to derive both quantitative and qualitative data.

The results show that most stakeholders perceive desalination as requiring greater financial investment relative to the responses to its impacts. Institutional complexity, in terms of both the number of institutions involved in planning and implementation, and the degree of planning complexity, is perceived as similar. However, most stakeholders indicate that new knowledge and capacities need to be developed to successfully adapt to the effects of desalination. The interviews also point at two main barriers to second-order adaptation: a limited ability to acknowledge the negative consequences of desalination in light of its importance to water supply, and difficulties in relating to future negative effects that may take time to materialize. As this study shows, second-order adaptation is challenging and might encounter various barriers. Greater attention
Hydrogen and CCUS infrastructure development in the UK: the social acceptance of the Humber Industrial Cluster Plan

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Abstract

Hydrogen and carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) are critical to meeting the UK Government’s Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution as well as the Climate Change Committee’s sixth carbon budget. The UK’s ambition is for 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production by 2030 for use across economic sectors. As outlined in the 2021 UK Hydrogen Strategy, the UK plans a ‘twin track’ approach that aims to scale up large quantities of both electrolytic ‘green’ hydrogen and CCUS-enabled ‘blue’ hydrogen. There is substantial government support for investment in industrial decarbonisation infrastructure including low carbon hydrogen and CCUS.

The Humber industrial region emits more CO2 than any other UK industrial cluster. As part of the UK’s efforts to accelerate decarbonisation of the UK industrial clusters, the Humber Industrial Cluster Plan (HICP) aims to achieve net zero by 2040. The HICP aims to become a ‘SuperPlace’, where hydrogen, CCUS and renewable energy are developed and integrated to achieve rapid decarbonisation and net zero goals.

This paper explores the uncertainties and in particular the social acceptance of hydrogen and CCUS infrastructure development in the Humber industrial region. Our interdisciplinary and multi-method approach draws from psychological and social theory, as well as emerging frameworks for the assessment of sustainable energy technology acceptance (see e.g. Huijts et al 2012; Hyacinth 2016; Seigo et al 2014, Wustenhagen et al 2007). Our research reveals fundamental tensions in balancing different aspects of social acceptance for hydrogen and CCUS infrastructure development. In particular we identify disconnects in approaches to the required pace of development; the appropriate levels of governance; and the extent of public engagement, as key elements which may influence future development. Disputes over such issues have characterised UK energy and technology developments over recent decades, with limited evidence of institutional learning despite their prevalence.
Economic Development Policy is Hard

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Abstract

Even though research and analysis explaining the drivers of regional spatial inequality are both well understood and widely accepted, achieving meaningful change in relation to local and regional development policy remains difficult. The challenge for the UK is structural rescaling and restructuring does not pattern itself in the same way as the industrial structures needed for earlier productive places. Only when managing to organise sufficient scope at scale (Haughton and Allmendinger, 2013) can sub-national actors hope to manage the human costs of spatially blind macroeconomics as they are played out through weak subnational institutional forms. Palliatives such as competitive funding for #levellingup and devolution to mayoralties and combined authorities and growth hubs all fail to get to grip with the more profound spatial consequences. This paper, therefore, begins to map of this failed policy landscape, and the implications for doing impactful research.
When planetary cosmopolitanism meets the Buddhist ethic: Recycling, karma, and populist ecology in Singapore

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Abstract

This paper develops a new theorisation of cosmopolitanism that reimagines cosmopolitanism through planetary ethics. We explore the emergence of planetary cosmopolitanism: an ethical sensibility based on not only the oneness of humanity, but also that of planet Earth and its ecological and climatic worlds. Accordingly, this conceptualisation presents an ontological departure from longstanding anthropocentric readings of difference that are rooted in Western thought, and can destabilise the logics of difference that continue to define the human-nonhuman interface. We forge these ideas through an empirical focus on popular Buddhist ecological practices in Singapore – a secular society in which state-led technocratic discourses often underpin ‘green’ recovery visions. For many Buddhists, their understandings of human-environment relations, which are grounded in Buddhist cyclical understanding of space and time, underline not only the co-existence of non-human sentient beings, but also their purportedly egalitarian existential connections with humanity. In emphasising people’s belonging and bonds to the planet, a planetary cosmopolitan sensibility also promotes an ostensibly ecumenical consciousness towards humanity that transcends divisions of nationhood, religion, and other exclusivist coordinates of identity. It is a moral consciousness that is materially performed and negotiated through practices of recycling. By developing an understanding of planetary cosmopolitanism, the paper underscores religion as a critical yet oft-overlooked political site through which human-environment relations are reimagined and realised at the scale of everyday life. It also emphasises how the cultivation of planetary cosmopolitanism, as a form of populist ecology, could well be a resource of hope in a universally shared climate crisis.
Spatial Hinge in Urban Space Theatrelization

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Abstract

Literary geography is the study of the relation between literary and geographical space. It studies the relation, the dialogue of inter-, intra- and extratextual spaces. Geoliterary space is composed of literary places, routes and landscapes. A literary landscape is a complex geoliterary space locus that is associated with a particular writer. One of the stages of literary landscape preservation and development is its animation, which means the saturation of landscapes with material and non-material components, such as images connected with folklore, history, culture and local events. The animation of cultural landscapes means the reconstruction of the rituals, games and life of the people that lived in the area at the time of writing. Literary landscapes can also be animated by staging the scenes from the literary works of writers in the landscape that was described by them. It means that the setting in the book becomes the place where the play is set, thus, the landscape becomes the scenery. The present report sets out views on the way literary landscapes are animated at museums through theatrelization: the use of performance and historical reenactment during festivals and excursions and the formation of spatial hinges.
Avoiding Death “Cadeau”: Calibrating against Fatal Possibilities and Probabilities at a Burkina Faso Market

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Abstract

Since Blaise Compaoré was ousted from power in 2014, security in Burkina Faso has degraded gradually but dramatically in ways that materially shape everyday behaviour, understandings and feelings. Drawing on the articulations shared by Jacques, a Ouagaoudougou cobbler, about how potential “cadeau” (gift or giveaway) deaths shaped his everyday actions and investments in the future, this paper traces the “anticipation work” that was required to deal with escalating insecurity, alongside a coupled economic crisis that exacerbated other risks that the lack of social protection left Jacques vulnerable to (Adams et al., 2009; Anderson, 2010). Moreover, grounding this exploration in the specificity of Jacques’ framing of risk and his strategies for coping with it illuminate how different repertoires of resources and responsibilities shape personal experiences of a structural security crisis. In doing so, I seek to explore what shifting individual and collective “margins of manoeuvrability” tell us about what parameters of agency people experience in dealing with intensifying threat, and what actively internalising and responding to such evolving margins does and costs (Massumi 2002).
Voluntary Non-Migration as Climate Change Adaptation: Livelihood Resilience Approach

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Abstract

‘Voluntary non-migration’ is a largely under-researched topic, especially within the climate change adaptation discourse and has increasingly come to the attention of scientists and policymakers for sustainable adaptation planning. So far, there exists hardly any conceptual and methodical guidelines to study environmental non-migration. Taking this research gap into consideration, this paper explores studying environmental non-migration based on the notion that the decision of non-migration can be described by factors of livelihood resilience. This includes factors of a societal and an environmental dimension on the community and the individual/household level. They are supposed to inform migration decisions taken in case of a hazard or creeping change of the environment. Their influence generalizes the spectrum of migration and non-migration decision-making which is conceptualised by four broad outcomes of voluntary and involuntary non-migrants and migrants. This analytical concept is operationalized through examples of concrete factors with respective indicators. An empirical study is used for an indicative assessment of environmental migration and non-migration in southwest coastal Bangladesh. The results suggest that Livelihood Resilience Index (LRI) has a relationship to the voluntary nature of decisions once they are made, but the resilience of a household cannot predict the decisions the household will make to stay or migrate. The paper concludes that the proposed analytical concept with its exemplary factors may be an initial means on how to holistically explore migration decisions in the context of natural hazards and climate and environmental change. However, environmental non-migration remains complex and multi-faceted, and its assessment requires deeper examination at various scales.
What influences the implementation of natural climate solutions? A systematic map and review of the evidence

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Abstract

Emerging research points to large greenhouse gas mitigation opportunities for activities that are focused on the preservation and maintenance of ecosystems, also known as natural climate solutions (NCS). Despite large quantifications of the potential biophysical and carbon benefits of these activities, these estimates hold large uncertainties and few capture the socio-economic bounds. Furthermore, the uptake of NCS remains slow and information on the enabling factors needed for successful implementation, co-benefits, and trade-offs of these activities remain underrepresented at scale. As such, we present a systematic review that synthesizes and maps the bottom-up evidence on the contextual factors that influence the implementation of NCS in the peer-reviewed literature. Drawing from a large global collection of (primarily case study-based, N = 211) research, this study (1) clarifies the definition of NCS, including in the context of nature-based solutions and other ecosystem-based approaches to addressing climate change; (2) provides an overview of the current state of literature, including research trends, opportunities, gaps, and biases; and (3) critically reflects on factors that may affect implementation in different geographies. We find that the content of the reviewed studies overwhelmingly focuses on tropical regions and activities in forest landscapes. We observe that implementation of NCS rely, not on one factor, but a suite of interlinked enabling factors. Specifically, engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities, performance-based finance, and technical assistance are important drivers of NCS implementation. While the broad categories of factors mentioned in the literature are similar across regions, the combination of factors and how and for whom they are taken up remains heterogeneous globally, and even within countries. Thus our results highlight the need to better understand what trends may be generalizable to inform best practices in policy discussions and where more nuance may be needed for interpreting research findings and applying them outside of their study contexts.
Uneven Adaptation Pathways Created by Climate Tourism in a Heavily-Sinking Thai Coastal Community

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Abstract

Over 500 million people live in deltas worldwide. In particular, sea-level rise is increasingly becoming a threat to these people since it brings not only flooding but also higher and stronger storm surges which can cause land subsidence (Minderhoud et al. 2019). This paper Khun Samut Chin, a peri-urban coastal community on the Chao Phraya River Basin and on the outskirts of Bangkok, Thailand as a case study to understand adaptation pathways in response to sea-level rise within deltas. The community has experienced heavy coastal erosion and has had to move three times because of the erosion and intense storms. In response, they have built new mangrove forests and also built bamboo and stone dykes along the coast. To pay for their adaptation costs and supplement their incomes, they have built a number of homestays and created activities which tourists can do and sell items which tourists can purchase. They have successfully utilised the media to raise awareness of their situation as being at the forefront of climate change. In particular, the community has publicised its temple which is the only remaining building in the area where they had previously lived. The land around the temple has now subsided into the sea. Community leaders have been able to use the publicity as well as social media to attract local tourists who come from Bangkok and surrounding areas to stay for the weekend. While this community is an example of one which has successfully developed “climate tourism” as an adaptation pathway, it has also created different pathways within the community since some have benefited more from tourism development than others. The paper discusses these inequities and argues that pathways within communities can differ as a result of household differences and power dynamic within communities.
Rethinking the Theories of Globalizing Latecomer Regions and Inspirations from China’s experiences

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Abstract

The economic globalization of late-comer regions is a classical topic in economic geography and many disciplines. Its theoretical origin can be traced back to the state economic development theories since the 1960s, to the global industrial shift and division of labor theory led by geographers in the 1980s. Subsequently, the emergence of Global Value Chain (GVC) theory gradually replaced these traditional studies and became a new mainstream theoretical tool for globalization research. On the basis of absorbing the ideas of GVC, geographers put forward the perspective of relational economic geography, the theories of Global Production Network (GPN) and strategic coupling. Although these theories are good at explaining the global industrial dynamics from developed to underdeveloped countries and the rise of Asian Newly Economies (NIEs), they still struggle to explain the strategic coupling of China, such a mega-scale object. On the one hand, the huge market size, transitional institutional environment and multi-scalar forces are difficult to be fit with existing theories; on the other hand, there are too many factors exerting strong influences on different regions and different moments. Therefore, this paper proposes the concept of trans-scalar tension that explains the dynamics of strategic coupling which lead to an engagement of actor with different interests and behaviors. These interests and behaviors are more unpredictable and uncontrollable that those at the same scale. The key of good coupling rests in whether the tension is reconciled among local, regional, national and global actors. In the experiences of globalization of the Pearl River Delta (PRD), this paper identifies such a scenario. Local actors have been frequently conducting check and balance, negotiation, and complementation among the coupled actors so as to maintain synergy. This effort allows the development trajectories moving forward in their own favor. The dual-circulation strategy in the PRD is one of the key examples. This paper inspires us to re-acknowledge that strategic coupling is essentially a process of globalization in which multi-scale engaged.
Jol e kumir, Dangai Bagh: Adaptation pathways of local communities to increasing extreme events in Sundarban Delta, India

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Abstract

Adaptation to climate change is increasingly gaining the central stage of pathways to understand the impact of increasing extreme events, particularly in deltas, and process of adjustment, planning and implementation. Based on 42 semi-structured in-depth interviews, this paper aims to explore the local knowledge-based adaptation pathways of local communities to increasing extreme events including sea-level rise in Sundarban Delta, India. The study found that vulnerable geographical settings, increasing extreme events such as cyclones, water surge, frequent floods, saline water intrusion and subsequent widespread destruction of lives and properties, changing livelihoods are the major challenges encountered by the local communities. Participants revealed that they experienced the impact of climate change-induced extreme events on agriculture due to loss of soil fertility, livelihood, health and social relations. As part of their adaptation strategies, the local people, particularly the young generation, prefer to migrate to urban areas and work outside as seasonal labour, they are reluctant to engage in traditional livelihoods of agriculture and fishing. In addition, people are constructing pucca houses (concrete) with Government aid. The introduction of machines and technology has changed the traditional agricultural practices and crop cultivation in the last two decades. The local communities perceived concretisation of embankments, which will prevent saline water intrusion, alternative livelihood, government aids and infrastructural development are the significant adaptation pathways to mitigate the increasing climate change induced extreme events in this Gangetic delta.
Exploring the nature-wellbeing relationship in the face of climate change

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Abstract

Spending time in nature benefits our mental wellbeing. Many of us took solace in parks, gardens, and the countryside during COVID-19 lockdowns. Yet, climate change is altering many of the natural systems and processes we experience in the world around us. These changes could bring both threats to our wellbeing (e.g. species extinctions leading to anxiety) and opportunities (e.g. new migrant species leading to excitement and fascination). With humanity facing Earth’s sixth mass extinction and temperature increases of more than 4°C by 2100, there is an imminent need to ascertain how these global challenges might be interlinked. Using interviews, we explore how climate change has affected the relationship between nature and human wellbeing using several case study examples (e.g. arrival of Wally the walrus, 2020). We identify pathways between biodiversity and mental wellbeing (e.g. stress reduction), biodiversity and climate change (e.g. birds migrating early), and climate change and mental wellbeing (e.g. eco-anxiety). These findings help us begin to unpick the connections between biodiversity and human wellbeing in the face of climate change, with implications for both public health and the conservation of biodiversity.
Parrhesia as framing democratic and critical involvement

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Abstract

The paper deals with Foucault’s conception of political parrhesia, and argues that it is decisive for understanding politics as an autonomous practice, which conditions democracy. Two issues are essential: the nature of parrhesia, that is, what kind of practice is it and how does it differ from rhetoric, and its political context. Foucault primarily discusses political parrhesia in two settings: the councillor to the political ruler, and the speaker in democratic fora, the political community. I will focus on the latter, because it most clearly indicates what underpins the autonomy of politics then as now: the bracketing of the veto power of social stratification, religion, and truth in the political domain. Parrhesia plays a crucial role here by framing a type of practice, mentality, and location in which citizens are free and equal. To approach political parrhesia in this manner also clarifies how it informs the meaning of critique and how it is related to public political reasoning in a democratic community.

In unfolding this argument, I look at how power is related to freedom and truth, and what this means for critique. Foucault’s discussions of parrhesia question the leftist mantra that critique is speaking truth to power. This is not only because truth and resistance cannot be outside power, or because the truth it speaks claims scientific status as in Marxism (which eliminates democracy), but because truth and freedom are not antithetic to power. Thus, critique as truth (parrhesia) does not link up with political strategies resisting ‘the system.’
The Lake District after the Covid-19: New Challenges, Old Divides

Basak Tanulku
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Abstract

2022 has become the year of recovery regarding the economy, education, travel, and everyday life. This paper will address issues facing the rural by focussing on the Lake District, which has received attention during the COVID-19 pandemic. As one of the UK's national parks and world heritage sites, it has already been a popular destination for domestic and international tourists.

COVID-19 has changed some ordinary but essential things taken for granted in our daily lives. First, it locked almost one-third of the world's population to their homes at different levels (Buchholz, 2020). Due to "social distancing", physical contact in the private and public realm has nearly ceased. Education has stopped in almost every stage, while non-essential businesses closed and a significant number of people have lost their jobs, which strengthened already existing or led to the formation of new inequalities (class, race, gender). However, there were some positive side effects, such as cleaner air in cities, while green spaces have gained more importance (Moore, 2020). Also, crime rates have declined due to the lockdown measures (Jacoby, Stucka and Phillips, 2020).

During the pandemic, cities have received the most attention due to their density, size and role in the economy. Instead, the rural realm has not been much analysed, even though it received the attention of urbanites who escaped to the rural, perceived as healthier and safer. The rural also experienced various issues related to a lack of services, infrastructure, and people escaping from cities to the rural realm (Phillipson et al., 2020). This process has also deepened existing problems and inequalities and existed before the pandemic.

By focussing on the Lake District, the paper discusses what it could face in a post-pandemic period, particularly the area's tourist industry, local economy, housing and demographics and natural and cultural heritage.
Israel’s International Permit Regime: Perceptions of the State and its Effects on Daily Life

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Abstract

In this article we discuss Israel’s “international permit regime”, the bureaucratic formation that issues, restricts or withholds visas and thus governs the lives of foreigners affiliated with Palestinians living in the West Bank. We focus on the emotional and experiential effects of two major features of this regime: i) its arbitrariness and opacity; and ii) the ability and power of bureaucrats to make law ‘in the moment’. We draw from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with foreigners living and working with Palestinians to show the relationship between one’s perception of the logic of the state and one’s ability to navigate the international permit regime (entry into the country, movements through various borders, checkpoints, policing, visa apparatus). We find that the more one perceives the state as rational and logical, the harder it is to navigate and survive daily life and its restrictions. We show the stages of emotional responses and actions and their cycles. Building on literature on the state effect and the experience of documentary regimes, we contribute an elaborate case study that shows how people’s mobility, daily lives, emotional lives, and choices are shaped by their interaction with the state.
Adaptation to floods through migration and shifting vulnerabilities, case of Lodwar, Kenya

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Abstract

Migration triggered by climate is often a problematic yet nearly unavoidable adaptation measure, particularly due to increasing severity of natural hazards. How different dimensions of power emerge, risks evaluated and vulnerabilities shift at different scales simultaneously in the processes of migration as an adaptation strategy is yet poorly understood. The feminist political ecology, as well as negotiations of spatial and temporal dimensions of risks are crucial for understanding how vulnerabilities shift.

The study discussed took place in a small semi-arid and rapidly growing town of Lodwar in the poorest county of Kenya - Turkana, characterized by severe flash floods. Fieldwork was conducted in 2019-2022 using qualitative research techniques with respondents living in different pre/post-flood risks and supported by key informant interviews. I analyse three cases of shifted vulnerabilities, all related to river and flood management: 1) “sensitization” of communities to relocate due to the risk of Turkwel dam spillage in 2021 that I frame as responsibilisation of the poor, 2) the river diversion plan that has shifted flood risk exposure from one (more politically influential) neighbourhood to another, and 3) consequences of relocation that result not only in deepening poverty, but also shifting vulnerabilities within the family with consequences for gender inequality.

Though the government and NGOs are aiming to mainly minimize immediate flood related risks, people insist on consideration of incremental and slow risks through resistance, resilience and rework (Katz 2001, 2004). Despite these manifestations of agency, the existing adaptation approaches continue to deepen socio-economic inequalities and jeopardize people’s pathways out of poverty.
Materiality, mobilities and meanings of hospitality - coping with (un)voluntary visitors in rural Sweden

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Abstract

This paper discusses the paradoxes and challenges that face rural towns and villages as they become sites for different waves of development and decline connected to global economic and social processes. A dual understanding of places as both complex social realities including lack of resources and the negative consequences of being a place in the margin, parallel to a role as leisure and pleasure periphery for visitors, constitutes the basis for our work. We approach issues of structural changes and intersections of mobilities in rural areas from a perspective of hosts and guests/visitors. Our conceptual framing includes issues of mobilities and hospitality practices as we set out to re-conceptualize the meaning of visitors/guests, to include all temporal and more permanent mobilities of people and interconnections to place. The paper offers insight from a case study in Bergslagen, central Sweden, in a village known for both a flourishing tourism industry, depopulation and loss of jobs and services and more recently also for displacement of socially vulnerable individuals as well as a place for seasonal migrant workers. Through this single case study, we contribute with an empirically driven general conceptual discussion on the challenges and paradoxes that places and rural communities face when trying to cope with and care for their visitors, at the same time as the concept of visitor and hospitality may be challenged, and thus how paths towards resilience may be found.
Making (dis)abled pedestrians in Buenos Aires in the early 20th century

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Abstract

In the early 20th century, the city of Buenos Aires (Argentina) experienced a rapid growth in population, traffic, and size. This paper explores how policies linked to urban progress in this period produced a normatively bodied and normatively behaved pedestrian subject. Indeed, a series of material and regulatory interventions enabled mobility throughout the city for some, while not improving –or even restricting– mobility for others.

On the one hand, as motorised vehicles came to dominate the city’s landscape, transport-related infrastructure and legislation were modified to facilitate the flow of traffic. Many of these changes aimed to clearly separate pedestrian and vehicular spaces, both for safety and for efficiency. However, elements such as raised sidewalks or traffic lights presupposed a normatively walking and seeing subject.

Simultaneously, as the city’s population grew and diversified, the local police force began passing and enforcing a series of low-level regulations to control urban life, especially in public spaces. None of these rules criminalised disability directly. However, some of them, together with the national Civil Code, allowed police to forcibly institutionalise certain disabled individuals for begging or for “disturbing the public peace”.

Taken together, I suggest that these public policies contributed towards making a pedestrian subject that followed certain bodily, behavioural, and class standards. Pedestrians who fit into those normative standards had their mobilities cleared of obstacles; whereas other subjects were not taken into account or were even considered themselves to be hindrances in public space. Consequences of these ableist space-making practices still persist today.
Protecting Mon’s rocks and Forest Fawr walks: hard realities of managing geo-leisure ‘beyond recovery’.

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Abstract

Visitor numbers recorded at two Geoparks in Wales clearly demonstrate sustained and significant increase in both vehicle and footfall totals in the post COVID period, when compared to pre-2020 data. As both regional and international travel restrictions remained in place until late 2021 many UK nationals chose staycations as a viable alternative to travelling farther afield, with many selecting rural areas as their preferred option to avoid the crowds. Combined with the ‘stay local ‘message emphasised during the pandemic, and enforced 5 mile travel rule for physical exercise many people inhabiting urban areas were (and are) drawn to our national parks and other environmental designations. This has seen rural areas of the United Kingdom experience a boom on both visitor numbers and in cases increased demand for a rural lifestyle.

Empirical studies of the impacts at the two case study Welsh Geopark sites, demonstrate the significant and sharp change in visitor numbers. This trend indicates the need for not only well designed destination management plans for the sites and catchments to capture and enhance the local value, but also clearly to the urgent need for monitoring of impacts on sites that have been internationally designated for their uniqueness and value for geo-conservation even to regulating visitor numbers. It is suggested from this research that in the process of recovering from the restrictions of lockdown managers of many rural tourism and leisure face hard realities both of site management and of managing expectations of visitors in terms of access and responsible use and behaviours. Many of these challenges will have to be addressed in the case of these designated areas within funding constraints. It is suggested that this is to both regulate for conservation of the resource and to negate future negative impacts of inappropriate development on host rural communities.
Disrupting bodily boundaries: exploring the lived experiences of young ‘ostomates’

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Abstract

Feminist contributions have reclaimed the body as a powerful space of resistance (Longhurst 1994), framing it as ‘the geography closest in’ (Rich 1986:212). Urban and Disability Geographies can further engage with these discussions through explorations of leaky bodies as ‘in-place’ and ‘out-of-place’. Exploring the leaky and unbounded body disrupts taken-for-granted binaries such as public/private, inside/outside, clean/dirty and human/non-human. This paper reflects upon ongoing research with young people living with an ileostomy or colostomy (a surgically formed opening of the bowel which diverts faeces into a ‘bag’). The project explores how everyday life with an ostomy shapes, and is shaped by, negotiations in space, relationships and experiences of identity and community; in turn, challenging understandings of the body as fixed and bounded. The discussion responds to early fieldwork observations, which utilises participant-centred, flexible, ‘multi-format’ (Liddiard 2017) and ‘culturally-credible’ (Halliwell & Wilkinson 2021) interview and diary methods. Such findings raise important questions about whether scaling in to specific organs (i.e. the bowel), spaces (i.e. public toilets), and materials (i.e. mucus, poo, microbiomes) can help uncover a more intimate relationality between bodies, places and things.
Classed and Gendered Spaces: Exploring the Provision and Use of ‘Baby Essential Services’

Hannah Slocombe
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Abstract

For families and children most affected, everyday life has become increasingly strained and shaped by the classed and gendered impact of austere policies as well as the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This research explores this impact by centralising the relatively under-considered spaces which have emerged in the last decade to support families with children navigating circumstances of hardship, namely ‘Baby Essential Services’. This term encompasses Baby Banks, Baby Basics and Growbaby organisations which although diverse in their remit, operation and scale share the common tenet of freely providing essential material items and forms of social support to families expecting, or with, babies and young children in need. It does so by drawing on a national-level survey of these organisations, as well as in-depth interviews with staff, volunteers and those that have used, or currently use, these services. In foregrounding these spaces as well as the experiences of those that work within and use them, this research highlights how social class permeates experiences of maternity, childhood and family life in various highly personal ways through these material absences. Further, given that these spaces are disproportionately run and used by women it also highlights how these classed experiences of family life also intersect with gendered inequalities, particularly inequalities experienced by mothers.
Volunteering, resilience and refugee lives: the experiences of young refugees in Uganda

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Abstract

This paper explores volunteering by young refugees in Uganda and its impacts on their resilience, lives and livelihoods. There is substantial geographical and other literature exploring volunteers and volunteering, including its impacts on volunteer subjectivities, professionalisation and wellbeing. Research has also explored volunteering in relation to displacement and to development in the global South. But across these literatures, research has often focused on volunteering for, not by, vulnerabilised groups. This paper analyses findings from Refugee Youth Volunteering Uganda (RYVU), an ESRC/GCRF funded mixed methods project which has engaged with 3,260 participants, mainly young refugees (aged 15-24), to explore their volunteering in three refugee settlements in Uganda (Bidibidi, Nakivale and Rwamwanja), as well as urban Kampala. Uganda currently hosts over 1.5 million refugees and asylum-seekers – the majority of whom are under 24 years old – and our research reveals high rates of volunteer participation among refugee youth. In this paper we highlight how young refugees work and re-work ideas and practices of volunteering to build their resilience and agency, challenging traditional ideas of volunteering as ‘service-delivery’ for refugee communities. To do this, we: 1) analyse the relationship between refugee volunteering and ‘work’; 2) explore the role of volunteering in young refugees’ navigation of the spaces and places of displacement; 3) explore how volunteering creates particular, if uneven, spaces of coming together and connection. We conclude by suggesting that to understand volunteering in young refugees’ lives, we need to address its simultaneous potential for increasing resilience and entanglement with experiences of vulnerability.
'I was an object of curiosity': Navigating facial difference in everyday urban environments

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Abstract

‘Any person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated, or in any way deformed ... an unsightly or disgusting object ... shall not therein expose himself to public view’ (Chicago City Code 1881; cited in Schweik, 2009: 2).

Here lie the ‘ugly laws’. These words present the enforcement of a statute that formally banned certain people from public space due to their appearance – a statute that extended beyond Chicago into other US cities, the UK, and Europe, and one that was maintained until the early 1900s (Przybylo and Rodrigues, 2018). Scholarship surrounding the ugly laws has situated these laws within a disability framework, reflecting on how such formal exclusions of certain bodies from social and urban space ‘disables’ such bodies based on aesthetic and appearance-based discrimination.

Within this paper, I locate the experience of those living with a ‘facial difference’ (any condition or characteristic that impacts the appearance of the face) within such a framework. While the specific legal exclusion of certain bodies based on their appearance may no longer exist, I critically reflect on how a stigmatised politics of appearance ensures that, to some extent, the ugly laws still rule. By engaging with both theoretical insights (Goffman, 1986; Hahn, 1989) and my own empirical research carried out with those whose faces do not conform to a dominant ‘aesthetic norm’, I locate the place of the ‘changed’ or ‘different’ face in a disabling world, where aesthetic prejudices are replicated and bound up in ableist and attitudinal urban environments.
Shielding in Wales: National Identity and Everyday Experiences

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Abstract

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, people were advised to ‘shield’ by the British and Welsh Governments if they had compromised immune systems and were thus at higher risk of a severe reaction to the virus. Some people did not leave their homes for several months, the effects of which have been well documented by news stories. Academic literature has begun to document the effects of the pandemic, but less attention has been paid to the effects of shielding specifically. This research focuses on the experiences of shielding in Wales during the first lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and aims to shed light on how this isolation affected their daily lives and if it changed their relationship with the nation. It analyses responses from a questionnaire that Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales ran between May and October 2020. This questionnaire was conducted during the shielding period and covered four topics: daily life, health and wellbeing, government and information and the future. This research also includes semi-structured interviews with people who shielded from a town in South Wales, where the interviewees were asked to bring some items to their interview that remind them of their time spent shielding, which helped to avoid direct and invasive questions about topics that are potentially emotionally distressing. Preliminary results will be disseminated during the presentation. It is important to hear these personal narratives that are often overlooked in official discussions of coronavirus policy.
Rethinking responses to disability hate (crime) in the city

Edward Hall
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Abstract

There has been a significant and concerning increase in disability hate incidents in recent years (Home Office, 2021). A significant minority of disabled people commonly experience hostility, verbal abuse, harassment, and in some cases violence, in city centres and in the neighbourhoods where they live (Hall, 2019). In response to this, and the hate experienced by people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, and people from the LGBTQ+ community, a series of legislative and policing measures have been put in place. The principal tool adopted has been the reporting of incidents to the police, and campaigns to encourage reporting, with the potential outcome of prosecution. As such, hate has been conceptualised as an issue of individual perpetrators and victims, with criminal justice as the response. However, evidence has demonstrated that while reporting can be a process of recognition and empowerment (Donovan et al, 2019), underreporting is widespread, with many people not having the confidence to report, due to lack of trust in the police to take them seriously, fear of reprisal, or unconvinced that there will be any outcome (Sin et al, 2009). As actions along the continuum of hate continue to rise, a different response is needed. This paper draws on a study of people with learning disabilities experiences of being in and moving through the city, their use of space and their social relations with others known and unknown, to examine how, where and why forms of hate emerge, to seek insights into potential ways of rethinking responses to hate. Further, it reviews current and emergent responses, developing an argument for the adoption of a ‘socio-ecological’ (Cramer et al, 2020) or ‘landscape’ (Hall et al, 2022) conceptualisation of hate, and the alternative, context and social relational focused, responses that arise from it.
**Time, Narrative and the Value of Places**

Rogelio Luque-Lora  
University of Cambridge, UK

**Abstract**

Recent and longer-standing scholarship in environmental geography and philosophy has articulated place-based understandings of environmental values. Some of these articulations suggest that narrative is the medium in which such values develop. By narrating themselves into cherished places, it is argued, humans come to value their surroundings as embodiments of their memories and life histories. Through ethnographic research in Wallmapu/Chile, this paper explores the relationship between time, narrative and environmental values from a different perspective. Instead of considering places valued for constituting individuals’ life histories, I dwell on landscapes in which most values were erased a long time ago. Mapuche lands have suffered three waves of colonisation: first, by the Spanish Crown; second, by the Chilean State; and third, by international forestry corporations. These waves of colonisation have turned many previously inhabited, multi-species landscapes into desolate monocultural plantations. In many cases, narratives about the land do not constitute individual life histories in which self and landscape interpenetrate. Rather, narratives bring the past to bear on the present by preserving historical memories of the lost values of places. These memories, and the narratives that articulate and preserve them, carry a sense of potentiality for the future values of landscapes in Wallmapu if changes in land ownership and governance were effected.
Clandage: Building Climate Resilience through Communities, Landscapes and Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

Landscapes, communities and individuals have historically and continue to cope and adapt to climate change, some through incremental changes (potentially unnoticed), whilst others make rapid adjustments, reflecting abrupt changes in their environment. The impact of these activities and the effectiveness of adaptation practices have, and continue to, leave traces in our modern landscape. Geographical context and circumstances influence how individuals and communities experience the world and interact with their landscapes. Local knowledge, practices and experiences emerge in place and reflect their specific environment and become embedded in materialistic and adaptation responses and behaviours, and technological developments. In doing so they make a distinctive contribution to community trajectories of vulnerability, adaptation and resilience over time. Understanding how communities have interacted with their environment and adapted, provides a basis for examining how future changes may be managed and communicated through a variety of mechanisms, building resilience at a range of spatial and temporal scales across landscapes. Information on past adaptations is often recorded, but poorly integrated into discourses around community resilience. Therefore, communities can be ill equipped to make informed and appropriate adaptations for building climate resilient futures. Clandage is a co-created project with Historic England that addresses this information and process gap, it brings together the wealth of cultural heritage information available to provide an informed understanding to past actions and adaptations within the landscape.
Geographies of expert knowledge and volunteer work during crises and beyond in Uganda, Tanzania and Nepal

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Abstract

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant challenges to volunteer-involving development organisations, impacting on their ability to continue to deliver programmes and to engage with volunteers and communities on the ground. However, it also provides a lens through which to interrogate how the expertise and knowledges of different types of volunteer are brought to bear on development projects during moments of crisis, in ways that would not necessarily have been expected - or even possible - in pre-pandemic times. Drawing on research conducted throughout the pandemic in partnership with the INGO Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), across Tanzania, Uganda and Nepal, we explore relationships between different volunteers in the context of VSO’s ‘blended volunteering’ approach, analysing how these were shaped by both the immediate crisis of the pandemic, as well as longer histories of development intervention. We analyse the degree to which the pandemic unsettled hierarchies of knowledge within and between volunteer spaces, providing an opportunity to de-emphasise the traditional prominence of international volunteers within the volunteer experience, and to recognise and capitalise on the skills and expertise that exist within communities. However, we also critically analyse the degree to which historic traces of inequality persisted through the pandemic, and how these continue through and beyond the crisis, despite claims of rupture. In considering how volunteering practices might evolve in the post-pandemic context, we critically explore how insights into the blended volunteering approach demand that we expand existing conceptualisations of volunteering expertise and re-work assumptions around global and local volunteer mobilities in the context of crises and recovery.
Food Regimes, Crisis and the rise of Humanitarian Food Networks

Joshua Lohnes
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Abstract

The United Nations’ World Food Program (WFP) received the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize, spotlighting the geo-strategic role that food aid plays in maintaining the contemporary political and moral order. Founded in the 1960s, the agency now works to deliver food assistance to victims of acute food insecurity and hunger in over 80 low-income or conflict ridden countries. In wealthier nations of the global north, the concurrent institutionalization of food banking networks over the past 40 years demands a shared analysis of the roll-out of humanitarian food networks writ large. The discursive and material frameworks driving the expansion of food aid across the world are intimately tied to capitalist food systems crises, geopolitical interests of dominant nation states and the attendant power of their agro-food concerns. Drawing empirically on the growth of humanitarian food networks in central Appalachia, this paper untangles the set of paradoxical social relationships driving the growth of feeding lines in the United States and beyond. Multi-scalar managerial techniques developed by the corporate food regime to address contradictions between the co-production of food surplus and food scarcity come to govern precarious lives while reinforcing institutional distance between givers and receivers and misaligned motivations between organizations and the people working in them. As food aid organizations increasingly leverage hunger relief discourses to advance sustainable development goals related to nutrition, economic development and peace it leads to critical questions over the role of household precarity in maintaining and advancing new forms of global food system governance.
Emotional geographies of solitude: Male refugee experiences of loneliness, healing and self-discovery

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Abstract

In hostile discourses in the Netherlands, Syrian men are portrayed as unwilling, dangerous and undesired subjects whose identities pose a threat to ‘Dutch’ social imaginaries and the articulation of national identities and belongings. In response, I seek to explore and understand how young Syrian male refugees in the Netherlands actively renegotiate multiple meanings of masculinity in relation to home and domestic work. The paper focuses on fragilities and vulnerabilities that men experience in everyday life once they migrate into a new context, face new class, labour and family situations, and engage with renewed emotional labour. I draw from field research with young Syrian male refugees who reside in the Northern Netherlands since early 2015. Between 2016 and 2020, I conducted narrative and walking interviews with forty-four men. The research illustrates that emotional experiences and encounters are woven into the everyday lives of Syrian men in the Netherlands. Dispersal, restrictive labour market integration procedures and experiences of everyday racism cause emotional distress, and forces many men to stay home often by themselves. I illustrate how Syrian men engage in leisure activities to ease their feelings of loneliness. Second, I demonstrate how household practices allow men to discipline their body in order to reconstitute themselves as a subject and find healing. Last, I show how the absence of others allows Syrian men to explore and discover new emotions and identities. Consequently, the paper emphasises that Syrian men are thinking-feeling selves who actively renegotiate emotional geographies despite an arrival society in which spaces where Syrian men can be men remain scarce.
The financialization of student accommodation and its implications for the city

Joe Rees
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Abstract

A new phenomenon has changed the shape of university city centres over the last decade, with some 25,000 private purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) beds now being delivered into the UK market each year. This represents a transformation from traditional student housing patterns of living in university owned halls or private houses of multiple occupation.

This research, explores how student housing has now become ‘financialized’, moving away from the main purpose of housing students and now providing a new frontier for capital investment in the built environment of university cities. The period since the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 has seen many real estate investment trusts (REITs) enter the student housing market buying up brownfield sites in university city centres and building and renting out blocks of hundreds of flats to students in search of high returns.

This research focuses on the case study city of Swansea (Wales, UK) which has had at least 12 new high-rise purpose-built student accommodation blocks introduced over the last decade. I am using semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders including the local authority, PBSA investors, HMO landlords and the university in addition to a walking tour interview with groups of students and local residents to analyse how PBSA has been implemented and the impacts of the financialization of student housing on the city and its citizens.
The (re)construction of disability through encounters in accessible parking spaces

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Abstract

Public space has frequently been identified as a social product where power relations are enacted, shaping and being shaped by the encounters that take place within it (eg Pritchard 2021, Hall 2019, Imrie, 2014). Encounters with strangers play a key part in shaping everyday experiences of disability in public spaces (Keith, 1996). As one of the few spaces in an inaccessible world that are explicitly designed for disabled people, accessible parking bays provide a unique opportunity to examine these encounters in detail.

Building on poststructural theory, this conceptual paper will focus on deconstructing these encounters to explore how power relations are enacted in this space. Ideas explored include how stigma marks disabled people out as different (Goffman 1963) and hierarchies of impairment (Deal 2003) form ideas about who is a ‘legitimate’ disabled person, which are reinforced through media representation of disabled people (Briant et al. 2013). Accessible spaces can thus become spaces of biopower (Goodley, 2011a), where disabled people are subjected to surveillance both by other and by self-surveillance. Building on affect theory, the circulation of emotions in these places will be explored (Burch 2021, Ahmed 2014).

Breaking down the significance of these encounters helps us understand more clearly how interactions in public space shape everyday experiences of disability, through contributing to psycho-emotional disablism (Reeve 2008). It also enables asking questions about whether accessibility schemes aimed at removing structural barriers may in fact create new barriers if they do not account for wider societal attitudes towards disability.
Public acceptability for a transformation of car parking in urban neighbourhoods: A case study from two German cities.

Annabell Baumgartner
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Abstract

A large proportion of the scarce public space in cities is taken up by car parking, making these areas unavailable for other land uses like green spaces, places of encounter or infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation. Parking management is thus a key factor for the socio-ecological transformation towards more sustainability in cities. However, the successful implementation of transport policy measures towards a reallocation of public spaces is often constrained by concerns of public resistance. Against this background, the presented empirical analyses investigates the public acceptability of different restrictive and demand-oriented measures that aim to transform parking. For this purpose, in March 2022 we distributed a survey to 4800 households in eight neighbourhoods within the two German cities Frankfurt/Main and Darmstadt.

The presentation focuses on the theoretical background and the research questions of the survey, mainly about the acceptability of (i) the implementation of parking fees and (ii) the transformation of on-street parking into other land uses like bicycle lanes or green spaces in the neighbourhood of the respondents. The theoretical background of the research elaborates the effects of four groups of factors potentially affecting the acceptability: First, spatial factors, comparing the eight investigated neighbourhoods. Second, psychological factors, which relate in particular to the expected effectiveness and fairness of the measures. Third, mobility practices like the use and availability of different modes of transportation as well as the orientation towards cars using the Stage Model of Behavioral Change (SSBC, Bamberg 2013). And lastly, socio-economic factors, focusing in particular on aspects of gender. Taken together, the results of the case study could help understand and predict public acceptability of measures implementing sustainable and democratic transport policies.
On the well-being of refugee youth in shrinking cities

Norma Schemschat
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Abstract
Refugee-centered revitalization as a strategy to slow down or halt urban decline has entered academic and policy discourse (Pottie-Sherman, 2018). While shrinking cities can provide opportunities for long-term and new residents, they can also be places of socio-economic challenges (Bernt et al. 2009; Rousseau/Béal 2021). Arrival under such conditions, then, merits closer attention. As refugees are increasingly relocated to or arrive in cities struggling with decline, the paper attempts to shed light on their well-being and strategies to cope with the challenges posed by urban shrinkage. The paper places refugee-centered revitalization within the broader context of economic restructuring and urban competition in which forced migrants are either framed as ‘engines of opportunity’ (Pottie-Sherman, 2018; Pottie-Sherman, 2020) or ‘financial burden’ and ‘security threat’ (Fawaz 2018). Starting from a critique on a dichotomous discourse that oscillates between boosterism and securitization, the paper argues that the current discourse on refugee-centered revitalization almost always erases the agency of refugees. By presenting first results from interviews conducted with refugees in three shrinking cities [Akron, OH (US), Nevers (FR) and Pirmasens (D)], the paper builds on research on arrival in non-metropolitan areas. It is hoped that it contributes to this growing field by shedding light on the complex and multiple challenges refugee youth is confronted with in shrinking cities, and on the creativity and resilience they show in overcoming them.
Volunteering in and beyond crises: practice perspectives

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Abstract

This presentation shares perspectives on managing voluntary labour from practitioners who have extensive experience working through diverse crises in global South settings. Two practitioners from the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will reflect on their experiences of mobilising, organising and training and supporting volunteers in Egypt, Burundi and more broadly across West and Central Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. Through this, the presentation will provide an opportunity to understand continuities and ruptures in volunteer engagement through Covid-19 from the perspective of those seeking to coordinate and support volunteers across different sites and priorities. The presenters will particularly reflect on how their work sits alongside international humanitarian action, and what this has meant for volunteer engagement during different moments and periods of crisis and recovery. They will also identify and discuss the critical challenges they anticipate for ongoing and future volunteer engagement for volunteer managers and volunteers themselves in a post-pandemic context, particularly in global South settings.
Walking Islandness

Christina Bosbach
University of Aberdeen, UK

Abstract

This paper reflects on walking practices on the Isle of Coll (Scotland) during the pandemic. It is based on fieldwork conducted between summer 2020 and 2021 – much of which happened on walks. Walking has been a remedy against loneliness and ‘stuckedness’ for islanders even before the pandemic, becoming more so as lockdowns restricted socialising and off-island travel. While some walked more and thereby forged new connections to familiar places, others simply kept up their walking habits. Either way, the affective and embodied experience of walking shifted as islanders compared their experience on Coll to how they imagined lockdown in urban areas. Their reflections on the privilege of access to beautiful landscapes, on the ability to walk or spend time outside for hours without running into others and risking infection, and experiences of walking with others safely in the absence of Covid-19 cases highlight the intertwinment of movement, place and wellbeing.
Sentiment Analysis of Urban Places during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Understanding and assessing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on people’s sentiments in Amsterdam, based on Twitter dataset and sentiment analysis.

Celeste Richard
Delft University of Technology, Netherlands

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic affected the way we live in society because of measures being implemented through the years, in order to contain the virus’ spread. These measures limited and changed how we lived and experienced life in the urban environment. Presumably, people got affected and impacted by this new way of living, as freedom was drastically lessened.

This research aims at understanding how people felt during the Covid-19 pandemic, thanks to a sentiment analysis approach based on microblog data from Twitter. Geolocalised tweets are processed and analysed in the web application Citysent, previously developed by TU Delft students. The goal is to get a deeper understanding on when people felt negative or positive, to then highlight correlations between Covid-19 pandemic measures in Amsterdam, and its inhabitants’ wellbeing. This research tries to understand to what extent the Covid-19 pandemic affected people sentiments, while creating a method for visualising sentiments in cities.

Results from this sentiment analysis in Amsterdam show that people sentiments were influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic as there is a clear decline in sentiment positivity through the months. As a matter of fact, whenever the country was experiencing a restricted life, the average sentiment was dropping, and conversely when the country was getting freer from measures, the average sentiment was rising again.
Reading “for difference” Social Innovation. Dialogic practices of re-politicization in Urban Gardening

Chiara Certomà, Paolo Giaccaria
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Abstract

The paper contributes to the topical explorations of the polyvocal nature of Social Innovation in the urban context. We wonder whether the dualistic reading of Social Innovation initiatives, as neoliberal vs revolutionary, is appropriate and productive; or rather, we should accept their intrinsic ambiguity and boundary-transgressing nature. We explore the collaborative grey area where the confrontational stances turn into dialogical practices to answer this question. Inspired by Gibson-Graham’s intuition that escaping dichotomies and blurring boundaries can produce creative possibilities, we dig deep into the character and agency of a broad urban gardening network called Zappata Romana in Rome, Italy. Our telling of exemplary gardening projects shows the inadequacy of a binary reading and shed light on whether, how, and under what conditions the ambivalent character of SI offers grassroots agency a standpoint to gain acknowledgement and support; and what form of SI re-politicization these projects support. In doing so, we claim that the very polyvocal and contradictory nature of SI represents a generative terrain for socially emancipatory and creative practices.
'We are here, Hear!’ – Touring arts-based research project on barriers to education for refugees

Sarah Sartori
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Abstract

In 2021, we carried out peer-to-peer participatory action research (PAR) with 104 refugees and people in the protection process in Ireland around their experience of trying to access higher education. The full report is available to read here, along with the public engagement video ‘Deconstructed’ with spoken word artist Felispeaks. One of the recommendations was that more be done with regard to cultural awareness in relation to refugees, who they are and who they were, what they have been through, and what they face when they arrive in Ireland.

This research used Photovoice as a methodology to explore people’s experiences, and over its course, I spoke to the research team about curating an outdoor exhibition of participants’ Photovoice, to take the work into the public arena, and the ‘We are here, HEAR Project’ (WAHH) was produced. Photovoice exhibitions have been used all over the world with the intention to foster social change, and if carried out as part of PAR, have shown positive individual empowerment results.[1] WAHH comprises of a touring exhibition, website, and cultural awareness training programme, and was developed and designed in consultation with people who have come through the refugee and protection process in Ireland, and aims to do the following:

• Promote increased awareness of barriers to higher education experienced by refugees
• Engender a greater sense of ownership of civic space for refugees
• Make visible experiences of a community who are ‘hidden’ by occupying public and virtual space
• Take research outside the academy and into the public forum
Prison Blocks in the sky: The realities of Birmingham’s approach to destudentification of HMOs and a Laissez-faire attitude to PBSA development.

Wil Vincent
Birmingham City University, UK

Abstract

As a city comprising of 5 universities across 7 different sites, it is understandable that Birmingham would have large clusters of students living in what have become ‘studentified’ areas. Historically, this was mainly focussed around Selly Oak, the City Centre and Perry Barr, with the latter becoming largely ‘destudentified’ due to the movement of Birmingham City University to the City Centre.

The issue of HMOs have long existed within Birmingham for both students and other communities, and has been discussed at length through planning policy and the media. The imposition of an Article 4 Direction first in Bournbrook, the main cluster of HMOs in the city, expanding out to the rest of the city shows the resentment of HMOs by Birmingham City Council and the perceived problems they bring, wanting to shift student accommodation away from otherwise residential areas.

When combined with the need to hit a Five Year supply of housing, Birmingham City Council have used PBSAs as a duel positive to shift the balance of student accommodation, and hit housing targets which the city has struggled to achieve otherwise. In doing so however, this has led to large clusters of PBSAs isolated from retail, leisure and community assets, especially to the Northern edge of the City Core. This session explores the impact of a disjointed approach to decision making, development and placemaking, and how these have effectively become ‘Prison Blocks in the sky’ when considering how students live, travel and are treated as part of society.
Cycling Through Air Pollution and Traffic: Risk Perception, Mitigation Strategies, and Subjective Safety of Committed Utilitarian Cyclists in the German City of Aachen

Jennifer Bosen
RWTH Aachen University, Germany

Abstract

An increasing body of research is examining human-centred factors contributing to cycling as a mode of transport. As an active mode of transport, high cycling modal shares potentially improve the quality of the environment and increase populational health. For cycling to become a major mode of transport, cycling risks and their impact on the subjective safety of cyclists play a central role. In our paper, we analysed committed utilitarian cyclists’ risk perception and mitigation strategies concerning air pollution and traffic on one central route through the German city of Aachen. Our results build on problem-centred interviews with ten utilitarian cyclists who had cycled one route through the German city of Aachen regularly over a longer period of time. Interviews were analysed with qualitative content analysis method (QCA). We identified mitigation strategies concerning the risks air pollution and traffic and found that strategies may seem counter-intuitive to non-cyclists or less experienced cyclists. Understanding cyclists’ mitigation strategies can contribute to understanding potential cultural and social factors impacting utilitarian mobility behaviour. Our paper provides insights into the habitus of committed utilitarian cyclists and derives conclusions for the social and cultural factors influencing a cycling-friendly mobility culture and can ultimately contribute to more sustainable transport planning.
Disability and social upheaval: between debilitation, exclusions, and demands for justice

Lucía Guerrero
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Abstract

This paper interrogates the relationship between disability and the city through the lens of one of the latter’s increasingly prominent features: large-scale social protests. Specifically, I focus on protests staged between 2020 and 2021 in Bogotá, Colombia. Despite its capacity for expressing dissent, social protest can be a site of exclusion for people with disabilities and a platform for disablist violence, due to the inaccessibility of public spaces and the threat - or, given its frequency, the promise - of police violence. On the one hand, people with disabilities are not always afforded the conditions to exercise the right to free assembly due to architectural and attitudinal barriers, including unchallenged assumptions about disability within social movements, as well as lack of consideration for the access needs of demonstrators. On the other hand, violent repression of protest may produce disabilities, as evidenced by the prevalence of ocular injuries (at least 103 during the Colombian National Strike) resulting from the deployment of less lethal weapons for crowd control during protests. In such cases, disability appears as a lasting and highly visible punishment for civil disobedience, a debilitation of social and individual bodies; however, it is often also reclaimed as a symbol of resistance by the citizenry. Thus, a focus on protest renders visible direct violence as well as subtler, sustained forms of slow violence and debilitation of social and individual bodies. Attending to this, I suggest, may shed some light on the imbrications between claiming accountability for disablement that results from police violence and demanding life-sustaining conditions as part of broader struggles for disability justice.
Making space for students in Turin, Italy. Policies, discourses, and actors of an evolving student accommodation landscape

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Abstract

Turin (Italy) has become one of the most attractive Italian venues for young adults moving from other regions and countries to enroll at the university. Turin’s transformation into a university city may be partially explained as the result of, both, improved attraction strategies implemented by the two main public universities of the city, and territorial inequalities at the national level. However, other factors were vital for this process to happen. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the local political agenda has included its Higher Education ecosystem as a crucial institutional partner in fostering a knowledge-driven process of economic restructuring, to cope with the multiple drawbacks of a post-industrial transition.

Drawing on the results of a qualitative research, the contribution explores how the evolution of local growth strategies, discourses, and policy directions has led to identify the provision of student accommodation facilities as a priority for the City. On the one hand, the research has focused on the multiple interventions and actors that have been taking part in implementing Turin’s strategy on student accommodation as key attractive element and driver of economic growth. On the other hand, it has shown how other factors became concurrent forces that support the process of ‘making space for students’ in Turin, by indirectly contributing to the effort of providing further student accommodation facilities. This contribution finally reflects on how the drivers and policy measures behind these changes in the student accommodation landscape correspond to the prevalence of an urban growth strategy pivoting on the image of Turin as a university city that, ultimately, overshadow the implementation of alternative plans and political agendas responding to different local needs and instances.
Challenges in Applying Justice Theories to Retreat as Adaptation Practice: The Administrator’s Dilemma

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Abstract

There is little agreement on what fair climate adaptation looks like in practice, and numerous justice theories provide little guidance to practitioners. Theories struggle to assist decision-makers in prioritizing goals; addressing trade-offs; and resolving conflicts among stakeholders. These challenges can be illustrated using practical decision points routinely faced by adaptation administrators, using the example of managed retreat property acquisitions, and by exploring how justice theories complicate rather than resolve decision dilemmas. Challenges include distributing actions that cause both harms and benefits; defining community; and prioritizing trade-offs among stakeholders, theories, and outcomes. Absent theoretical guidance, administrator decisions are shaped by mental models, worldviews, and knowledge of the local context and are constrained by limited authority, resources, and institutional goals. Stakeholders with different conceptions of the community, the role of government, and the purpose of adaptation, may disagree on whether outcomes are just. Achieving just adaptation may therefore require more holistic adaptation planning efforts that work to create shared visions of the future. Achieving greater justice in climate adaptation, and environmental practice more generally, is likely to require both greater agreement on what justice entails in particular contexts and a major restructuring of the larger governance systems within which decisions are made. More nuanced evaluations of adaptation justice, more comparative analyses, and more holistic approaches to adaptation governance are proposed as steps forward.
Co-op mode: The emancipatory potential of freelancer co-operatives in the UK Games Industry following the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Abstract

There are numerous forms of corporate structure, but many do not have offer protection to workers from exploitation and inequalities which can arise in the videogames industry; however, co-operatives are a method of employment that can provide this protection, and more. Although worker co-operatives are not currently a common method of ‘corporate’ structure, they are becoming a viable option for start-up companies all over the globe. Their viability only increases when you consider that there are currently 2 million freelancers in the UK, with the majority (1.77 million) working freelance as their main form of occupation. The COVID-19 pandemic has been difficult for those freelancing in the UK creative industries with contracts being dropped unexpectedly and receiving little governmental support. Even with work continuing remotely, the videogames industry has also seen its fair share of issues, such as isolation and burnout caused by the remote exploitation of creative and emotional labour.

This paper highlights the emancipatory potential of co-operatives and collectives amongst freelancers in the videogames industry. As a result, it adds to existing discourse on how COVID-19 has impacted freelancers in the UK’s creative industries, and in particular the videogames industry. Additionally, the paper adds to existing knowledge on the viability of co-operative working groups and their emancipatory potential against toxic working cultures, particularly within the UK videogames industry. Lastly, the paper highlights how, following COVID-19, co-operatives have potential to be the future of creative work to prevent issues highlighted by the pandemic occurring in the future.
Understanding the influence of the environment on children’s mobility: lessons from London and Santiago

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Abstract

The literature has acknowledged the influence of the built and social aspects of the street environment on children’s mobility. However, children’s views on these issues are often neglected. This proposal seeks to redress that gap and explore those matters from the perspectives of children (between 8 and 16 years old) from London (UK) and Santiago (Chile). It aims to share the findings of a sequential study that mixes methods and comprises two stages. In the first stage, children were invited to talk about the social and physical attributes that are relevant for travelling (semi-structured interviews). Meanwhile, in the second stage, children were asked to rate attributes of the built and social environments (rating scale) and choose between pairs of images of street environments that seem more suitable to travel alone (stated preference tasks). In both stages, children’ carers were also invited to participate. The analysis of the data from London indicates the features that encourage unaccompanied walking trips are well-kept footpaths and greenery. Crowded footpaths and the presence of teenagers in the public space discourage such trips. In Santiago, well-kept footpaths and playgrounds encourage unaccompanied walking trips and the presence of strangers drinking alcohol or male strangers in the streets discourage them. In addition, girls tend to have more concerns and fears than boys; meanwhile, those living in deprived neighbourhoods seem to care less about the environmental conditions than those living in more affluent areas. Furthermore, the findings suggest that children’s perceptions differ considerably from those of carers, reporting more favourable or positive views towards a range of studied attributes in the environment and the people inhabiting the public spaces. Nevertheless, as they grow older, children’ perspectives tend to converge with the attitudes and beliefs of their carers.
Everyday volunteering during protracted crises: a case study from Burundi

Bianca Fadel
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Abstract

This paper critically analyses the roles of local volunteering in everyday routines during a protracted crisis. Based on qualitative data collected through an ethnographic and participatory approach in Burundi, the paper questions traditional explanations about volunteering centred on service-delivery and giver-recipient dichotomies by focusing on agency and reciprocity at community level. Despite the critical roles of volunteers during protracted crises, their presence is often assumed in practice and obscured in humanitarian and development literatures – which tend to focus on the notion of crisis only as an exceptional condition, fixed in time and space. The paper aims to address this gap through discussing the roles and experiences of local volunteers in a global South context where conflict and socio-political instability have not only persisted over time but also deeply affected people’s livelihoods in multiple ways. The analysis of the Burundi case study thus develops a critical conceptualisation of volunteering that reveals how it does not fit established humanitarian or development languages and frameworks but rather transcends and destabilises them as volunteers work across and between such spaces in their everyday routines at community level during a protracted crisis.
Fare prices and metropolitan accessibility: The effects of public transport fare reform on accessibility and equity levels

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Abstract

Spatial segregation of social groups within cities and inadequate transport conditions are frequently pointed to as major barriers to improving urban livelihood conditions for disadvantaged groups. For that reason, accessibility measures have increasingly been used as a tool to measure inequality. However, traditional accessibility measures fail to capture both travel costs and individual characteristics, which are central to equity. Failure to take this factor into account can lead to an overestimation of accessibility and hinder our perception of inequality. Therefore, this paper explores the changes in public transport fare prices from an accessibility and equity perspective. Given the April 2019 fare policy change introduced in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, this study examines how the fare restructuring, that is the integration of all public transport modes into a single pass with a maximum cost of 40€ per month, affects the public transport pass accession and impacts accessibility and inequality levels. Using survey data collected in June and July 2020, we compare the self-reported trip modes and travel costs under Lisbon’s previous and current public transport fare systems. We first evaluate the role of fare price changes in the transport pass accession rate through a binomial logistic regression model, controlled by sociodemographic variables. Second, we used the survey data to calculate the effective accessibility before and after the fare reform. Finally, using the Lorenz curve we compare accessibility inequality levels before and after the fare price change. Preliminary results show that fare reduction appears as an important reason behind public transport pass adherence. Price reductions improved accessibility levels for those that were previously priced out of the system; however, the uptake varied by user groups. Results from the more robust accessibility indicator show that overestimation of accessibility levels is a real problem, which may cast out social groups, especially low-income segments.
Studentification in rural South Africa and the Need for Student safety and housing regulations

Nothile P Ndimande
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Abstract

The University of Zululand is one of the South African institutions created on racial and ethnic segregation ideology with the goal of consolidating homeland construction. It was founded in the village of KwaDlangezwa, under the Mkhwanazi traditional authority, to serve the Zulu-speaking populace. It was conceived as a training institution for the homeland labour force, as were most black universities in the country. The university on the one hand, provides opportunities for teaching and learning, research, and employment, and the village, on the other hand, provides off-campus housing for both students and staff. As the number of students grows, so does the need for village housing. Student housing in the village is mostly inadequate, unsafe, and unregulated. Both the 2019 and 2022 student protests centred on issues of student safety and off-campus living conditions. To investigate issues of safety and student living conditions, the article use qualitative methods, mostly interviews, and closely examines strategic policies and documents, activities, and events. This study argues that university and local governance structures should develop a strategy for improving student safety and follow guidelines set by the Department of Higher Education to regulate student housing in the village.
Disabled by relation: Navigating disability as mothers of persons with autism spectrum disorder in Singapore

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Abstract

In examining the multi-spatial landscape of care for persons with autism spectrum disorder (autism) in Singapore, this study seeks to illustrate autism as a disability that is socio-spatially experienced. An examination of the production of disabling spatialities in public spaces elucidates how stigma is experienced by persons with autism and their caregivers, who are often in close proximity. Due appreciation is also given to the strategic responses employed by caregivers to internalise, navigate and/or reject these public spaces of exclusion. Drawing from in-depth interviews with caregivers, ‘go-along’ ethnographic observation and time-space diaries, this study will contribute to geographies of care and disability literature by elucidating the diverse experiences of care and disability, and contribute to the scarce disability literature based in the Singaporean context. Most importantly, it seeks to serve as a space for caregivers’ voices to be heard.
Understanding the knowledge-action gap: Integrating health and wellbeing into flood adaptation planning

Stacey Heath
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Flood intervention strategies across the globe are implemented based on the myopic assumption that all adaptations are inherently good because they reduce the risk (and thus the impacts) of flood events. However, adaptation strategies are often reactive and decision making is underpinned by paradigms of efficiency, effectiveness and cost. We conducted qualitative interviews with expert panel members across three different country and site contexts to understand how health and wellbeing is integrated into flood adaptation planning. Our data shows that while the health and wellbeing impacts of adaptation strategies are acknowledged, they are rarely incorporated into planning processes. This, according to our expert panel members, is due to: a) lack of information and data - there are currently no metrics beyond the primary immediate and quantifiable impacts; b) lack of collaboration – policy and planning processes are determined by a variety of different actors depending on geographical and political context, with very little shared dialogue between decision makers. These issues lead ultimately to the creation of narrow, time limited and financially driven adaptation strategies that are unable to incorporate any ‘intangible’ impacts, such as secondary subjective stressors which affect wellbeing.
Storytellers, making and poetry in engaging the public in climate change

Alice Harvey-Fishenden
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

Over the last two years, the ways in which researchers interact with the public have had to adapt substantially. For the CLANDAGE project, this meant diversifying into storytelling, making and poetry to engage the public in climate change research. Artists and writers have engaged with climate change for a long time, but these activities have not normally not directly linked to research. Working with the Staffordshire Record Office, and using historical material relating to weather and climate, workshops were co-created with artists and practitioners. The poetry workshops explored historical archive documents around the topics of flood and drought, using different poetic styles. The making workshops involved recycling printed material (including scans of archive documents) from previous projects, which were read, discussed, and cut up by the groups. The paper was made into the shape of bird boxes, plant pots or watering cans, to which personal experiences and memories were added. The storyteller worked with a group in Burton-upon-Trent to craft traditional and personal stories into a filmed performance piece. Responses to the material were collected through the artistic outputs, as well as in interviews.

These activities engaged with people who wouldn’t otherwise come into the archive or get involved with academic research, and helped to develop socially distanced and remote ways to engage with archives. It has collected valuable information about how people think about climate, exploring embedded cultural knowledge, norms and practices around climate and weather. These activities have highlighted the value of the past in communicating about climate and helping people to see their local environment in a new way. This sets the stage for building climate resilience into the future.
Questioning conviviality? Mobile encounters and the visibility of public space

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Abstract

This article critically engages with the ‘convivial turn’ in writings about the city. We are, of course, supportive of finding hope in instances of togetherness and kindness. We are, however, cautious: not of being hopeful, but of the form that that described conviviality takes. We find ourselves asking ‘convivial for whom?’ In exploring that question, we draw from ethnographic engagements with frontline workers – park rangers and homeless outreach workers – in Cardiff and Manhattan. These are workers whose business is all about strangers, encounters, and publicness, and they get that work done by being about the city. They are all about the city. That they are mobile workers is significant. Our contribution does not start from a bounded site which may or may not be conducive to conviviality, but with practices which are designedly oriented to maintaining the possibility of public space as a coming together – or at least a coming into contact – of different groups. Considering, closely, relationships between encounters and strangers, and conviviality and conflict, we find less of an urban paradox of togetherness and distance, hope and hate, and more of a kaleidoscopic politics of visibility and publicness. We describe the improvisational practices of park rangers and homeless outreach workers for managing these politics, and the production of conviviality in unexpected settings, in unexpected ways. Public space is ultimately shown to be not a site in which conviviality or conflict might be found but, rather, an active accomplishment, variously coloured by the politics of seeing and being seen.
Walkability from conceptualization to policymaking: a conceptual framework evolution

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Abstract

The scientific literature consolidates the Walkability concept as an urban quality that favors walking. Despite progress made regarding walkability research, there is still a lack of methodological consensus and some abstraction about which components contribute to walkability implementation. We suggest that walkability should still be considered a conceptual construct through different complementary perspectives.

The diverse literature exposes several theoretical lineages that converge along the course of the Walkability concept's evolution, in response to different emerging urban challenges.

Consequently, the Walkability genesis would be implicit or explicit in multiple insurgent urban policy themes, increasing conceptual complexity.

Methods:

The work aims to present an evolutionary overview of the different theoretical components involved in the genesis of the walkability concept. The concept's complexity implies an interdisciplinary and qualitative approach that leads to a theoretical framework systematized in three phases. The work shows the evolution of the Walkability concept's theoretical components. Afterward, the analysis examines how the relevant policy documents incorporate the theoretical elements that favor Walkability implementation in Lisbon from 2000 to 2020.

Results:

The preliminary results point to the evolution of the expressivity of the Walkability concept. Walkability would be initially implicit in urban debates on Public Space, Land-use, and Public Transport. Then, it acquires an explicit and interdisciplinary value in research and public policymaking themes such as Environment, Sustainable Development, Public Health, and Livable Cities. This way, we intend to examine the conceptual evolution of Walkability as reflected in its implementation through Lisbon public policy over the past 20 years.
Young refugees in Uganda: volunteering in the context of Covid-19

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Abstract

This paper examines the voluntary labour of refugees in Uganda within the wider context of debates on volunteering in crises and recovery. It draws on a unique dataset that captures the voluntary activities of young refugees (aged 15 - 24) in Uganda via the ESRC/GCRF project ‘RYVU’. This research project has explored the kinds of voluntary labour practiced by young refugees across Uganda and how these impact on their skills and employability. This paper will discuss the institutional agendas surrounding these activities in Uganda and how these ideas have been understood in relation to the Covid-19 crisis. We will also outline the voluntary activities of young refugees during the pandemic in Uganda and reflect on challenges and broader inequalities of volunteering in this context. Through this, we provide a counterpoint to celebrations of volunteering during Covid-19, exploring how voluntary labour by young refugees during the pandemic articulated with refugee status, the spaces and places of displacement, and the inequalities refugees experience. By mapping the uneven geographies of refugee youth volunteering in Uganda during Covid-19, we disentangle volunteering from rhetorics of ‘service delivery’ and crises response, and contribute to wider debates on destabilising established ideas of voluntary labour.
Exploring the wellbeing impacts of flood adaptations

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Abstract

In this exploratory study we strengthen understanding of the impacts of flood adaptation on subjective wellbeing. Using empirical research, we examine emotional experiences (positive and negative affect) in response to flood adaptations and factors affecting those responses. We used three critical case studies to explore wellbeing impacts of different types of adaptation intervention, including nature-based solutions (England), hard engineering (Ireland) and planned relocation (Ghana). For each case study, two sites were selected to capture the adaptation continuum (ongoing and completed). Data were collected between October and December 2021 using a standardised household survey (n=1227). Our results show that flood adaptations impact subjective wellbeing, with people reporting both positive and negative emotional responses to adaptations. We found that wellbeing impacts differed with the adaptation context and in relation to people’s experience of floods and the extent to which adaptations affected their lives. These findings highlight that the impacts of flood adaptations extend beyond risks mitigated, which has important implications for sustainable flood adaptation. Crucially, we show that adaptations themselves can negatively impact on wellbeing. How impacts are experienced and distributed must be a priority consideration for just and sustainable flood adaptation. We also identify potential leverage points to integrate wellbeing into decision-making to ensure flood adaptations are part of a happier and healthier future.
A Consideration of Game Birds from the 21st Century Sporting Estate to Significance within Cultural History.

Natasha Coleman
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Abstract

Drawing on case studies from Britain’s private rural estates, this talk will discuss the spatial-temporal significance of game birds, specifically pheasants and red grouse. Assemblage thinking is used here as a methodological framework to reveal, interpret, and represent the realms in which the game bird and their mass (re) production, for sport, has endured (Delanda, 2016; Woods et al, 2021).

The talk shall shed light on game birds’ everyday existences, tracing the sites and spaces in which their lives play out. These include hatcheries, heather moors, high hills and valleys as well as their relations with closely associated actors, both human and more-than. The discussion also considers how within such assemblages the value of game birds as living entities is often only recognised in their final flight towards loaded guns. Further, opening a wider discussion of the overlooked contribution game birds have played in social and structural history, including their expressive role in capturing, promoting, and reproducing notions of idyllic countryside and Britain as an imperial powerhouse.

Finally, the talk considers how the enduring role and value of game birds is transitioning within an increasingly multi-functional rural landscape. Case studies illustrate how different estates are re-evaluating the place of game shooting and thus the future of game birds and other actors that uphold these spaces. Cumulatively, it is hoped that in paying attention to an often-overlooked aspect of geographical inquiry, the sporting estate, we can begin to recognise the potential contribution this can make to the more-than-human movement too.
Food System Resilience and Governance: A Pork Story in China

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Abstract

Given the leading role of pork in China's meat diet, the stability of pork supply alongside the sustainability of pork production had been priorities in the pork system governance. The central government thus began the Environmental Protection Campaign (EPC) of the pork system in 2014, aiming at optimising the regional layout of pig breeding and the producers' competence. However, such efforts have been interrupted and challenged by the outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in 2018, with domestic pork yield falling sharply in 2019 and pork prices and imports soaring consequently. By applying an empirical and in-depth observational analysis with the Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) model of these two significant events (EPC and ASF) in China's pork system, this paper examines how governance may influence food system resilience.

This analysis demonstrates the crucial role of governance in China's pork system - as a pressure source for EPC by proactively facilitating systemic transformation or as partners with the pork industry to fight ASF shocks. The pork-related policy priorities have experienced a swing between environmental sustainability and production recovery, particularly as manifested in adjusting the regional layout of pig breeding. Public authorities' weighing of sustainability and resilience across different stages has also led to contrasting views on policy formulation and implementation. From the perspective of resilience, this paper illustrates that pursuing reorientation of the pork system during the EPC has undermined the systemic robustness to cope with the ASF, while dedicated policies on recovery have further compromised the original goals of systemic reorientation. By exploring the sharing of risks and benefits among multi-jurisdictional and multi-level policymakers, this paper explains the involvement of governance in building food system resilience and reveals the complex trade-offs among sustainability, resilience and several dimensions inside resilience, i.e., robustness, recovery and reorientation.
Changing spaces from the bottom up: understanding emerging community adaptations to Covid-19

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Abstract

The regionally uneven health impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have been obvious (Munford et al., 2021). At the same time, evidence suggests that local social capital is linked to lower Covid-19 impacts (Makridis and Wu, 2021). Voluntary actions have been important responses to coronavirus, but evidence suggests unequal participation across demographic groups (Mao et al., 2021). Linking these themes, the phenomenon of ‘bottom-up’ adaptation to spaces - creating new spaces, and modifying existing spaces - has become apparent during the pandemic, potentially representing important information on adaptive capacity and social capital.

This research aims to collect spatial data via citizen science mapping of the relatively undocumented features that have emerged from Covid-19. We will explain how existing frameworks can be modified to classify these changes and deliver an understanding of how features may represent social capital. We will draw on insights from urban resilience and notions of resisting, recovering, adapting and transforming systems (Ribeiro and Gonçalves, 2019) and attributes of adaptations to climate change (Smit et al., 2000). Finally, we will show the operationalisation of this learning in data collection.

References:


Measuring car space and transforming it into space for people

Patrick Miner
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Abstract

As driving rates reach (or surpass) pre-pandemic levels, many governments in the Global North are preparing investments in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. In doing so, these governments are perpetuating the pre-pandemic status quo of harmful automobility. Limited resources that could be spent to improve walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport infrastructure will instead be spent to subsidise decades of future car use. While electrification of the global car fleet would likely reduce carbon emissions, the ongoing climate emergency and related social and public health crises require more transformative action. One such action would be reclaiming large amounts of “car space” to benefit human and environmental health and wellbeing. This presentation will describe a project currently underway to develop a method for measuring car space—the space consumed by the operation and storage of motor vehicles—using GIS and secondary data. The project focuses on the case study of Edinburgh, Scotland which has lower levels of car use compared to most UK cities but still dedicates a large portion of the public realm to parking and street space for cars. Once car space is defined, measured, and located, local residents and governments can begin to develop more environmentally and socially just uses for that space. Potential uses of car space include walking paths, allotments, parks, and affordable housing. Investing in these aspirational land uses can make space for healthy communities instead of space for more cars.
Is the student city lost? The rhythms of Lodz as a consumption-oriented student city in the COVID-19 pandemic lens

Jakub Zasina, Aleksandra Nowakowska
University of Lodz, Poland

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic seems to question hosting students as an urban neoliberal growth formula due to the introduction of lockdowns and the spread of online teaching. Therefore, we look at Lodz, Poland, to understand how student cities operate during the pandemic and to gain insights into their futures. By employing spatiotemporal framework, we unfold the pre- and inter-pandemic rhythms of students’ presence and consumer activities in Lodz’s time-space, as well as their attitudes towards the post-pandemic future. We show that the pandemic has spurred a substantial part of students to escape from Lodz and changed the activities of those staying in the city by limiting their frequencies and locations. However, we expect the student Lodz to reflourish, although its post-pandemic existence might be marked by further rhythm changes. Moreover, it will depend not on the demand for higher education per se but also on consumption and socialisation opportunities this city will offer to students.
Hidden in the Soil and Scrub: the violence of urban land clearance

Jenna Ashton
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

For this session I would like to propose a creative contribution. A segment of storytelling that opens and responds to the theme of recovery, informed by my current arts-practice as research, and accompanied by a short explanation.

I want to explore the naturalised violence of habitat and animal destruction in urban redevelopment strategies. Taking North Manchester (UK) as its case study and the imminent clearance of a self-wilded 46-acre brownfield site located at the edge of the Rochdale Canal. Once clay pits, brickworks, factory sites, or waste dumps, a number of these post-industrial legacy brownfield sites sit across Manchester awaiting development. The impact on low-income families of unequal development strategies in the city with little or no social housing provision is well known. What is not frequently acknowledged is the parallel violence that takes place within the soils and scrub when land clearance commences. A lack of care for this violence is underwritten by the ways in which species are allocated certain values or interest status.

Unthinking urban development, then, is a horror story. The barely audible screams of the Witness Tree are caught on the wind as her arms are slashed and broken in two. The Swallow-Child catches a rolling teardrop and pours it onto a patch of bare roots. What does this violence do to the people that must enact it and watch it? How do communities recover when they passively endure death hidden in plain sight? We must honour the loss.
An Index for Mobility

Alexander Rammert
TU Berlin, Germany

Abstract

Mobility describes a complex social phenomenon that determines individual opportunities and social participation. Despite this elementary role for social reality, there are still no adequate instruments to assess human mobilities on a greater scale. For this reason, I have developed a scientific index for mobility that helps to understand influencing factors and communicate relevant dependencies. Indexing is a common procedure in comparative politic analysis when it comes to assessing and comparing phenomena such as human development, democracy or freedom of the press. In transport and mobility research, however, this methodology is still largely unknown: Mobility remains elusive for theorist and practitioners alike.

Accordingly, the challenge of an index for mobility is that it integrates both quantitative and qualitative, objective as well as subjective factors. Based on findings from an interdisciplinary meta-analysis, I was able to identify 26 (measurable) core indicators that need to be evaluated for a comprehensive assessment of mobility. These core indicators can be related to each other using the index method, allowing for a comparison of different study areas or time periods. As a result, a mobility index value can be assigned to each study area, which allows valid statements about the condition of mobility in this area.

The aim of my presentation is to discuss this innovative method of mobility science and to present first results of an experimental application in a Berlin district. With the help of map-based visualizations I will show the central findings of my research and discuss potential use cases. An adequately constructed mobility index offers a systematic evaluation procedure for mobility than supports politicians, planners and society to shape the mobility system for the better.
Students in cities, students as citizens: towards a legal geography

Christopher Morris
King’s College London, UK

Abstract

Various tensions between students, higher education institutions (‘HEIs’) and host cities have been exposed through an expansive and established body of studentification scholarship. This project aims to contribute to that research by deploying a legal-geographical methodology to contextualise the student experience within a complex legal and financial infrastructure, with a view to exposing systemic inequities both perpetuating tensions and producing spatial injustices for students in university cities.

In the city of Flagstaff, Arizona, students at the Northern Arizona University (the city’s dominant HEI) comprise approximately one third of the overall population. Amidst a range of city and region-wide planning strategies, and heightened by a ‘Housing Emergency’ declared in 2020, the city-HEI-student nexus faces increased scrutiny. Students can already be considered a distinct class of legal subjects, foremost adopting roles of contractual counterparties as consumers of education and accommodation. To assert their participatory interest in the city, and achieve just outcomes within processes of urban change, they must also navigate the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Tensions arise where ‘town’ and ‘gown’ constructions of citizenship rights do not align; therefore, each stakeholder’s perspective must be understood. Analysing the legal matrices regulating those tensions, and engaging the viewpoint(s) of students, it is argued that controls exercised by other city stakeholders exploit and perpetuate power imbalances disadvantageous to students and limiting their participatory agency. Examining the city’s legal and financial infrastructure in this manner, and configuring student citizenship as a stakeholder interest, may purposefully serve to address spatial unfreedoms and systemic inequalities.
Animal Geographies’ Equine Paradox: Hidden Horses, Power and Place

Neil Ward
University of East Anglia, UK

Abstract

Over a history of two millennia in Britain and Europe, the horse has proved humanity’s most enduring and impactful animal relationship. The significance of the horse to the evolution of social and economic life is being rediscovered in anthropology (Forrester, 2016), literary studies (Raulff, 2017) and urban history (Almeroth-Williams, 2019). Despite this rising interest across other social sciences, relatively little attention in animal geographies has been directed to the horse, its place in contemporary human geography and its material socio-economic and spatial legacies. Drawing on a study of the role of the horse in the evolution of the spatial structure of modern Britain, and the legacy left by the age of the horse on both rural landscape and urban form, this paper reflects upon the hidden-ness of the horse in contemporary human and non-human geography. Embracing the sites of the plough, mill, stage-coach and poll tax riots, the paper maps out the historical geographies of British ‘horsification’ and ‘de-horsification’ over the last thousand years and their implications for contemporary equine geographies of people, place and power.
Colonial Cartography in Palestine-Israel and the Decolonising Potential of Counter-Maps

Zena Agha
Newcastle, UK

Abstract

This paper will examine the geographical imaginaries of (re)mapping practices in/of Palestine-Israel. Its main objective is to critically assess the potential of counter-mapping in a project of decolonisation. The focus will fall on alternative mapping practices by Palestinian and anti-Zionist groups. Often termed ‘counter-maps’, alternative maps attempt to recognise the past, critique the present and (re)imagine the future. By presenting research from counter-mapping groups as well as artistic explorations of return through counter-mapping, this paper will engage directly with important current debates on decolonising in geography (e.g. Radcliffe 2017) and cognate disciplines (e.g. Tuck & Yang 2012). It takes as its case study the destroyed village of Al-Dalhamiyya on the Israel-Jordan border and examines what counter-mapping and return look like in a destroyed place.

The paper interrogates new knowledge on historical and contemporary practices of mapping in Palestine-Israel and will make important conceptual and empirical contributions to current academic debates in critical cartography, settler colonialism and decolonisation.
Using the COM-B model to understand the relationship between accessibility and mobility

Njoud Al Hurr, Helena Titheridge
UCL, UK

Abstract

When discussing the inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups, we often talk about improving accessibility infrastructure and policies to increase mobility, but practically improving accessibility does not always translate into an increase in the number of trips made. For instance, there have been many investments to increase accessibility for the elderly, such as installing dropped curbs, improving bus stops, and introducing free travel passes; however, the number of trips made per person amongst this age group remains stubbornly low and has not increased in years compared to other groups. Therefore, this study aims to understand the relationship between accessibility and mobility by presenting a framework that maps the COM-B model through accessibility. The COM-B model is designed to look at a wide range of behaviors and understand how these behaviors can change. This will provide us with insights into why the improvements we make through accessibility do not translate into changes in travel behavior for some transport-disadvantaged groups.
Have all the ‘solids’ melted?: Intergenerational cultural geographies revisited at times of crises and pervasive uncertainty

Ana Gonçalves
Centre of Geographical Studies, Associated Laboratory of TERRA, Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, ULisboa, Portugal. Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies, Portugal. CiTUR - Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation, Portugal

Abstract

Bauman’s metaphor of the ‘liquid’ has never seemed so prevalent in contemporary cities and societies. Individuals had been gradually recovering from the setback of the economic recession and austerity measures imposed by the 2007-2008 financial crunch when they were suddenly hit by a sanitary crisis in the form of a coronavirus pandemic. COVID-19 forced individuals into successive lock-downs, quarantines, and prophylactic isolation, brought strong limitations to their personal freedoms, namely in terms of mobility, socialisation and cultural expression in physical spaces, especially in urban areas where an increasing perception of ‘mixophobia’ was more prevalent. On the other hand, individuals’ social isolation has resulted into another less visible and more enduring crisis in our societies which is that of poor mental and physical health. And after two years of this pandemic reality, the world is now faced with a war in Eastern Europe whose worldwide consequences, especially in economic terms, are yet to be fully grasped.

In the light of these 21st century successive crises and pervasive uncertainty, the ways in which different generations (will) interact in the urban environment need to be reexamined and consider the fact that changes in people’s mobility and in their appropriation of spaces are also redefining individual and collective affective landscapes. This presentation will thus analyse the transformation of intergenerational cultural geographies and how can the different age groups recover from the pandemic generation divide. More broadly, this presentation aims to shed light on the need for renewed insights and theoretical appraisals on intergenerational cultural landscapes, thus opening up for new modes of inquiry and questioning existing epistemologies that may help breaking new ground and disclose new possibilities on fundamental questions that relate to new social and cultural everyday appropriations of the urban environments by different age groups.
Can’t see the Cow for the Trees: The hidden impact of non-human actors on Tree Planting for Natural Flood Management.

Jenny Knight
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

Tree planting for Natural Flood Management (NFM) has become a regular narrative in current environmental discussion. Approaches to its study are largely technocratic and identify mechanisms and processes comparable to traditional engineering where the impact of functioning ecosystems are recognised as a source of uncertainty, rather than the impact of actors with agency.

My research took an interdisciplinary and participatory approach that enabled an exploration of the lived experience and expertise of practitioners – farmers and land managers within a case study river catchment. These practitioners described landscapes in which they and their decisions were entangled with the non-human actors as part of their landscapes.

Current policy and scientific practice often assumes an absence of animals. Mechanisms are studied in absentia and the physical removal of animals can be a key management practice; fencing off the riverbank is often the first step in developing trees for NFM on riverbanks.

However, this ‘simplification’ has ‘hidden’ animals from the science-policy interface. This impacts not only on policy and management interventions, but our understanding of landscapes and our place within them.

Amongst the many human-animal relations that became evident during my research, there are two key characters this presentation will focus on. I introduce the very visible Cow and her hidden relations with Himalayan Balsam, floods and the value of memory; and the devastating Hymenoscyphus fraxineus (the fungus responsible for Ash dieback) whose agency traces across our disciplinary silos like threadwork, impacting everything from the catchment hydrology to socio-cultural decision making.
Reporting on the university city: examining student newspaper coverage of the off-campus community

Lindsay Freed
Carleton University, Canada

Abstract

University students are actors of urban change, often unwittingly due to their transient nature and segregation from the non-student community. Contemporary research on this dynamic typically focus on either students’ spatial relationships or the political economics of their position in the city through their interactions with the physical environment. Less attention, however, has been given to the discourse students use to discuss the off-campus community, particularly in student-run news publications. This paper examines student newspaper coverage of interactions between students, universities, and cities to see what student journalists choose to report on in the community and how they write about it. This is done through a qualitative content analysis of three undergraduate student-run newspapers at universities in the United States and Canada. Particular attention is given to whether reporters and editors at student-run newspapers center the narrative on students’ understanding and experience of place.
Hidden in plain sight: decolonial ecologies of the Atlantic salmon

Austin Read
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

To call the Atlantic salmon a ‘hidden animal’ defies conventional expectations. This is a beloved ‘King of the Fish’ that regularly brings together conservation scientists, environmental campaigners, policy makers, anglers, naturalists and artists who all seek the restoration of degraded salmon habitats. Yet concealed beneath the familiar veneer of the species name are lesser-known stories of salmon. This paper argues that it is crucial for geographers and others from cognate disciplines influenced by the animal turn to attend to hidden stories of familiar animals. In doing so, we might develop a more critical understanding of what it means to be ‘hidden’.

This paper is specifically interested in exploring how hiddenness is shaped by ongoing structures of coloniality. Influenced by scholars such as Malcolm Ferdinand (2021) and Elizbeth Povinelli (2021), who have critiqued the concealment of colonial histories in dominant ecological knowledges, this paper scrutinises colonial histories underpinning the familiar top-down, species-driven knowledge of the salmon. The salmon is an appropriate animal to challenge colonial acts of concealment: as a migratory animal swimming between rivers and oceans, the salmon is a material tie between different ontological worlds. Drawing on ethnographic and archival research conducted on the River Severn, the river from which Britain launched its first colonial voyage and which has seen a recent collapse in salmon numbers, this paper hopes to weave together stories from these different worlds, thus articulating a vision of justice in which decolonial and ecological concerns are braided together all the way down
Rerouting municipal waste collection in Malta. An examination of waste collection routes with proposed new systems using GIS.

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University of Malta, Malta

Abstract

Kerbside collection of waste is not often included as part of carbon footprint analysis in view that it constitutes about five percent of the carbon emissions generated by the waste collection and treatment system. However, it also represents the most expensive functional elements in the entire waste management process, reaching as high as 75 percent of all costs in the total municipal solid waste (MSW) management system. Most costs relate to fuel together with labor costs. Fuel consumption results in various pollutants, predominantly carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide, which are of major concern due to their contribution to global warming and acid rain. In Malta, transport emissions reach 14% of total emissions which is significantly higher than the European average which generally reaches 5%. Currently there is no fixed collection route for waste collection. Routes are left to the drivers who devise a route simply on their experience. Therefore, room for improvement is clearly present and it is necessary to find an optimal solution to reduce fuel consumption and minimize emissions. This research uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) through the ArcGIS Network Analyst application to optimize routes by enhancing the efficiency of waste collection and transportation in the cities of Mellieha and Attard, Malta. The model that is created is based on data collection involving GPS tracking including bin position and collection route as variables. Operational costs and key performance indicators of the existing practice are estimated. Following this, other scenarios will be created to identify different scenarios with potential optimal routes. Direct positive impacts on vehicle operating times can be expected, together with operational cost savings and reduced CO2 emissions.
Encountering the state: pluralizing the narratives of community responses to state actions in coastal India

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Abstract

State and allied non-state actors take a variety of actions following disasters; actions that generate differing responses from the disaster-affected communities and individuals. A lot has been written about the forms such official actions take and their long-term positive or negative outcomes. There is some documentation of responses such actions elicit from the communities, including high resistance in the form of protests emerging from feelings of distrust. However, there are several other forms of community responses that need to be documented and analyzed, as they ultimately affect the outcomes for the people and the places in the long-term. This essay draws from the disaster recovery literature as well as political dynamics literature, to explore what drives political behavior and action from communities. The case of cyclone-affected regions of Odisha in India is used to explore the variety of responses from disaster-affected communities to the differing (in)actions. Empirical findings suggest that these responses vary significantly across a spectrum. On the one end, some actively support state action to the extent that it creates new demands for the interventions such as infrastructure investments like sea-walls. On the other end, some responses create alternate coalitions for self-organized actions to fill the recovery gaps that exist. The essay also highlights the different conditioning factors of trust, perceptions, narratives, and power, that prompt these variety of responses. In doing so, it surfaces the potential limits to participatory inputs in recovery needs.
Sorting materials, deciding their value: The value transformation in e-waste processing

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Abstract

The crises significantly affect the price movements of metals such as iron or aluminium, which is an important indicator for electronic and electrical “waste” (e-waste) management. In the COVID-19 pandemic, the production reduction led to the price hike of these metals. The discarded electronics as a resource of scrap materials attracted more attention, among others that of thieves who rob the valuable parts of the appliances. These thefts have economic, ecological, and political impacts on value and material transformation. However, besides the fluctuation of the metal market, other aspects affect the creation of value in e-waste disassembling. The revaluation of discarded electronics is continuously affected by workers’ perspectives and practices. A significant role plays the sorting and classification. Although categories of waste and materials are clearly defined in Czech legislation, this does not always correspond to the daily routines of workers. Their acts undermine the formal classificatory order and affect the outcomes of the disassembly process. I argue that the way workers classify materials significantly shapes various kinds of value for these materials.

Based on my ethnographic research at an e-waste processing company and in a company operating in compliance take-back scheme in Czechia, I show that in addition to macroeconomic aspects, individual practices of workers also interfere with the value and material transformation of e-waste. I discern the contextual factors that affect how workers classify and thus value the materials. These factors involve an experience shaped by nostalgia and relationships to people and things, as well as the materiality of things. In this paper, I shed new light on value considerations, highlighting value as dynamic and processual.
Industrial decarbonisation policy in the UK: thinking outside the clusters

Imogen Rattle, Peter Taylor
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Abstract

Energy-intensive industries hold a paradoxical role in the UK economy, accounting for 16% of national emissions in 2020 but also providing 2.6 million jobs, often in places with limited alternatives. Just over half of industrial emissions are generated within six long-standing industrial clusters located in coastal regions around the UK. Government strategy is to establish four low carbon clusters by 2030 and the world’s first Net-Zero industrial cluster by 2040. The concept of industrial clusters as a catalyst for innovation and growth is well established in the fields of regional innovation and economic geography. Low carbon clusters, however, are relatively new but the idea has gained momentum due to their potential to deliver government priorities of Net-Zero 2050, regional levelling up and Covid-19 recovery.

The success of this strategy however is not guaranteed. The strong networks which characterise well-established clusters do not necessarily support radical innovation but may instead lock-in the incumbent system. Nor is it apparent how the lessons learned will apply to the sites outside clusters which account for the remaining 47% of industrial emissions. Cluster decarbonisation focusses on hydrogen and carbon capture and storage technologies but these may not be economic elsewhere. With political attention focussed on clusters, there is a risk that industrial decarbonisation leaves some places further behind.

This paper explores the emerging spatial effects of UK industrial decarbonisation policy. Drawing from a systematic literature review on cluster initiatives and expert interviews from industry stakeholders, our research reveals the challenges of delivering an industrial decarbonisation strategy which balances the needs of different places, sectors and technologies. Spatial inequalities have characterised UK economic development for decades. Industrial decarbonisation policy provides one route for recovery but must extend beyond clusters if it is to succeed.
Heritage, conflict, and recovery

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Abstract

Conflict damage to immovable heritage is an emergent field, thrust into the limelight by the deliberate deformation and destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas (2001) and Palmyra (2015-2017). While these sites have taken centre stage in public awareness of heritage at risk through conflict, they are merely two examples of widespread damage that has been incurred throughout history and across most continents. When the smoke clears, how do we sensitively and sustainably deal with the damage left behind?

The Heritage in the Crossfire team is exploring new means of coping with conflict damage to heritage, and supporting team of heritage professionals remotely in the documentation and assessment of damage. Moreover, we explore the need for a closer integration of political discourse, policy making and physical field techniques in the approaches taken in post-conflict conservation efforts. Here, we present an international collaboration of geomorphology, archaeology, and political science to provide new and innovative insights into post-conflict recovery of heritage. This work is illustrated with examples of experimental work, remote collaborations with colleagues in conflict zones, and policy development for Blue Shield and NATO.
Youth, digital technology, and climate justice in Papua, Indonesia

Peter Howson
Northumbria University Newcastle, UK

Abstract

In this paper I explore how NFT markets are being leveraged to promote market-based forest protection in Papua, Indonesia. In doing so, I consider the challenges of selling pollution permits as carbon-backed crypto-collectables. Blockchain technology has been used by some conservation organisations to address various operational challenges with conservation financing for some time, including attaching automated conditions to carbon credits facilitated by programmable ‘smart contracts’. These ‘cryptocarbon’ platforms connecting blockchain fixes with Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), often rely on accounting systems that standardise carbon commodities to enable market fungibility. Yet, fundamental flaws remain relating to pricing and accurate monitoring of forest ecosystems, undermining consumer confidence in carbon markets. Drawing from interviews with youth groups and analysis of technical documents provided by active forest conservation projects, this paper considers the trade-offs in using non-fungible approaches to carbon accounting. I explore the interests, knowledges, power dynamics, and conservation outcomes across various networks of NFT carbon commodity production and exchange.
E-scooters: perceptions, experiences and aspirations for micromobility - a Greater Manchester case study

Graeme Sherriff, Luke Blazejewski
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Abstract

Following the start of national trials in 2020, shared e-scooters are now evident in many UK towns and cities. Together with their privately-owned counterparts, the use of which remains illegal on public roads, they are part of a growing micromobility and shared mobility sector that includes bike share, e-bikes and e-cargo bikes. At an international level, we see different configurations of laws, infrastructures and practices, which to an extent respond to varying levels of social acceptance and compatibility with existing mobility cultures.

There are claims that these small electric personal vehicles will help to cut congestion as well as the carbon intensity of transport systems. There is also potential to be inclusive, by providing a means of transport that is relatively cheap to purchase and charge, and that does not require the level of physical fitness an exertion of walking and cycling. Whilst not ‘active’ in this sense, they arguably provide a level of personal freedom and could be combined with other modes to enable more sustainable practices.

Based on a mixed methods study in Greater Manchester utilising surveys, reference groups and interviews, we explore the tensions inherent in the development of this new technology and its rollout. We consider the extent to which e-scooters can be seen to be aiding a transition to low-carbon and more inclusive transport futures and explore the ways in which they interact with other road and pavement users. We provide evidence on who is making use of these new vehicles, to what ends, and for what reasons, as well as how e-scooter ridership sits within wider mobility practices. We consider the views and experiences of other road users in relation to the impact of shared and micromobility on public spaces. We conclude with observations relating to research and policy development.
Domesticating a redesigned metro square: a design ethnographic study of the becoming of Enghave Plads.

Jonas Larsen
Roskilde University, Denmark

Abstract

Domesticating a redesigned metro square: a design ethnographic study of the becoming of Enghave Plads.

Introduction

A public square is nothing without public life and the people using and appropriating it. They are designed to foster specific forms of social life while preventing others, being inscribed with material affordances and cultural scripts about appropriate use and interactions. However, public spaces are also ‘staged from below’ in everyday interactions (Jensen 2015). Such interactions and practices animate places, bring them to life and make them central to people’s everyday lives. Moreover, it is these social interactions that explain how squares potentially enliven neighborhoods and create rich social worlds. Kock and Latham (2021) call this process ‘domestication’.

Drawing on and contributing to discussions about ‘staging from below’ and ‘domestication’ of public squares, this article explores ethnographically the becoming of a square (Enghave Plads in Copenhagen) through a particular focus on how users domesticate this newly renovated square and turn it into a meaningful and habitual place. While Enghave Plads is more 100 years old, the main part was demolished a decade ago to build a metro station that took almost a decade to complete. Based on observations and interviews from 2020-2022, this article explores how and to what degree users and businesses have domesticated the new square and turned this metro-station into a meaningful place that both support and break with the design script. I argue that ‘domestication’ of Enghave Plads is intimately tied up with establishing new practices and twisting old practices as well as attracting new practitioners and discretely excluding old ones. While focusing on social practices, I show that they are intimately tied up different materials (for instance, to-go coffee, beers, and chairs), associated social infrastructures (bars, shops, and bakeries) and COVID-19 regulations. I end by discussing what we can learn from Enghave Plads when it comes to good public square design.
When should dogs be walked? The role of time in the public space use of dog walking before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the regulation of dog walking has emerged as an issue in several parts of the world due to lockdowns. The regulatory dilemma stemmed from that many dogs require regular walks because of their housing conditions, so they could not adapt to lockdowns in the same way as humans. However, allowing dog walking in public spaces in time periods when other forms of mobility are restricted for humans, may result in unequal and potentially unjust access to walking by dog owners and people who have no dogs.

Nevertheless, not only lockdowns resulted in rules where time is a crucial factor in the use of public spaces by dog walkers. For example, there are public spaces where walking dogs off-leash is only allowed in certain time periods. Therefore, I investigate the role of time in the public space use of dog walking during the pandemic and beyond through case studies from Hungary.
At the intersection of citizenship, ethnicity and gender: Legal precarity and exploitation amongst Myanmar agricultural migrant workers in Thailand

Sofie Mortensen
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Abstract

Located on the border to Myanmar, the Phop Phra District is one of the most important agricultural areas in Thailand. Rich soils, a mild climate, good infrastructure and cheap, largely undocumented migrant laborers attract farmers from all over Thailand. With farm sizes spanning from five to several 100s of rai, the farmers employ a range of permanent and seasonal workers, predominantly landless families from rural areas around Bago, Myanmar. Through their migration, they have become a part of an intricate system between employers, local police as well as Thai immigration policy and officers that keep migrant workers in legal precarity and poor work conditions, including monthly police protection fees, frequent raids and salaries below half of the minimum wage. In this paper, I ask what enables this production of differentiation, and further the role that rurality, citizenship, race and gender play within. Based on life story interviews and photovoice, I address how the context in Phop Phra is an example of wider capitalist processes that whilst relying on the accumulation and free movements of labor, at the same time strictly govern migrants’ mobility and legally produce “illegality” (De Genova, 2002; Fassin, 2011; Proglio et al., 2021; Walia, 2013). Rurality is important, because migration to rural areas have received very little attention, compared to urban in the case of Thailand. Further, race plays a key role in “illegality” (Calavita, 1998; N. P. De Genova, 2002), and is carefully interwoven with current nationalist movements and border enforcements that organize to mask the racial differences that shape inequalities within migration (Sharma, 2006). Similarly, gender creates particular inequalities for women (of color) that for instance receive lower salaries and experience informality, and double reproductive and productive workloads (Bastia, 2014; Nawyn, 2010). Race, gender and space, as such, are crucial in the constitution of class within labor migration.
One woman at a time? An intersectional approach to women’s social differentiation in the shea nut supply chain of West-Africa

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Abstract

Celebrations of women’s individual economic success has become a key feature of neo-liberal feminism. In rural West Africa, the link between gender and poverty brought to the forefront a small population of economically successful women, in line with the assumption that poverty alleviation automatically leads to gender equality (Akinbobola 2019; Rottenberg 2014). However, such perspective relies on a simplistic approach on communities in general and rural women in particular, assuming that they are a homogenous and undifferentiated group. Therefore, it overlooks the complex and intersectional links generating specific power dynamics among women.

In Ghana and Burkina Faso, the increasing international demand for shea nuts, a West African commodity collected and processed by rural women, is a remarkable example of such individualistic approach of feminism. While the overwhelming majority of the shea nut collectors, despite the increased nut price, remains in a state of precarity and vulnerability, development programmes and companies keep framing shea as the “women’s gold” and as an efficient way to alleviate poverty among rural women (Elias and Saussey 2013; Friedson-ridenour et al. 2019). This approach fails to acknowledge that the few economically successful shea nut collectors rely on the exploitation of the rest of the collecting population, rendering the similar “success” of every shea collector unfeasible. In this paper, I use the shea nut case to argue that intersectional feminism, decoupled from a purely market-based approach to poverty alleviation, can deliver new narratives challenging the instrumentalization of women for other purposes than gender equality (Jackson 1996; Mollett and Faria 2018). Instead of a neoliberal individual-based feminism, there is a need to understand social dynamics in groups of rural women with grounded theories of (West-)African feminisms combined with an intersectional lens (Tamale 2020; Oyewumí 1997; Nkealah 2016).
Transport accessibility, social housing and liveability: the case of Ciudad Verde

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Abstract

This paper examines the geographies of access to essential and non-essential opportunities for residents of Colombia’s most significant social housing megaproject and the complexities of navigating marked centre-periphery functional configurations typical of many large and intermediate cities in the global south. The paper illustrates the application of quantitative and qualitative methodologies grounded in the concepts of liveability and accessibility that mapped the geographies of access and quality of life and the transition to web-based markets in contexts of high spatial segregation. Our findings show that although large top-down housing investments sought to provide local accessibility and connectivity, poor planning and an overwhelmingly segregated urban structure maintains low-income communities’ access and levels of liveability considerably constrained. Furthermore, in contexts of formal housing and top-down neighbourhood building, informal solutions tend to migrate to the digital marketplace, producing a homegrown community that enables access to goods and services otherwise unavailable in the development. This paper provides relevant insights and lessons for the practice and research of transport geography in disadvantaged communities in connection with the pressing search for social housing solutions in the global south.
Social Security in the Extractive State: Inter-Generational Equity and Agrarian Change in Upland Cambodia

Joanna Bourke Martignoni
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Abstract

Land inheritance has traditionally been a key social protection mechanism in the rural world. Young people are able to start or consolidate their own farms through inheritance, while older people secure care by providing land to children who look after them. Even though the shift from subsistence to commercial farming means that farming is becoming less important than wage labour to household incomes, land still retains a crucial affective, social, and economic function within rural families. In countries where rapid agricultural commercialization and ‘land grabs’ have radically altered the landscape, however, smallholder farmers face land scarcity. Since the mid-1990s, the Cambodian government has actively pursued agricultural development objectives underpinned by an ‘extractive’ logic within which private economic interests and patronage networks reinforce centralized authoritarian political power. Wealth and natural resources have been concentrated in the hands of the elite without any mechanisms to promote egalitarian resource redistribution. Thus, at the same time as it is undermining informal, family-based social protection, the state continues to be conspicuously absent as a provider of universal social security.

This paper draws on a large sample of qualitative interviews and focus groups carried out in 2016 and 2020 with indigenous and Khmer communities in Cambodia’s upland provinces of Ratanakiri, Kratié and Kampong Thom. The expansion of land grabs, cash cropping and indebtedness over the past decade is transforming moral economies of inheritance. These changes include a shift from matrilineal to bilateral inheritance, and the deferment of marriage and inheritance decisions due to a lack of land and other assets as well as over-indebtedness. As land scarcity and inequalities within rural areas become more pronounced, intergenerational obligations are reworked, and gendered, ethnic and class-based identities in relation to land are also being reconfigured.
Change is the only constant: navigating possible futures through Climate Change Education in UK Higher Education

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Abstract

As one unprecedented global challenge after another shakes the foundations of our societies, economies and natural environments, the ancient saying of “change is the only constant” feels more fitting than ever. Universities are seen as key institutions in crisis-management, expected to facilitate change by equipping the next generation to respond to an ever-increasing number of complex and intersecting crises. To succeed in this endeavour, Higher Education will need to become increasingly innovative, inclusive and impact-facing.

This is particularly the case in Climate Change Education, which is working against the clock to developing learners’ understanding about the causes and consequences of climate change with limited time to reflect on how different solutions or pathways taken will each have varied, yet far-reaching implications for people, places, power and politics around the world. Geographers have a key role to play in identifying and supporting navigation of these intersectional implications.

This presentation draws upon an evidence synthesis of Climate Change Education and Education for Sustainable Development in UK Universities, focus groups with undergraduate and postgraduate students and insights from Higher Education teaching staff across the UK to summarise the current approaches being taken and to identify gaps, needs and possible future directions to enhance delivery of this important work.
The green turn of the far-right populism in Spain: a (bio)political ecology approach to the environmental discourse of VOX

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Abstract

Far right parties have been traditionally associated to climate change denialism and yet, in recent times, their discourse has undergone if not a change of heart, at least a change of tone. There is still very little systematic examination of this ‘green turn’ in the far-right discourse and only an incipient reflection on how this change engages with the literature on the political ecology and populism. To bridge this gap, this paper uses critical discourse analysis to examine the evolution of VOX’s eco-narrative from climate denialism to a type of ecological imagination that builds on a combination of biopolitics and a national-populist narrative. First, we identify the main nodal points and antagonistic divisions articulated in the discourse of Vox related to climate change and environmental issues in general. VOX welds together novel chains of equivalent demands (Laclau 2005) for a “(real) ecology”, which strives to reconcile environmental protection, (re)industrialization and the recuperation of traditional rural life. Second, we trace how this storyline play out in the party discourse related to water, showing that VOX’s “conservative revolution” echoes Franco’s fantasy of a unitary Spanish hydrological political body (Swyngedouw, 2015; Lopez-Gunn 2009). This ecological narrative is based on the simultaneous production of people and nature as opposed to the “culture of death” (VOX, 2020) perpetrated by internal and external elite forces (e.g. leftist, independentist, European and global).

References


Geography in UK HE: Beyond Recovery?

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Abstract

More than a decade of marketisation of UK universities, twinned with a reframing of HE as ‘employability’, has led to a context in which Geography research, and Geography jobs, may soon be beyond recovery. At its best, Geography in the UK retains a holistic stance to researching problems that synthesises the physical and the human, unlike other disciplines and unlike Geography elsewhere. Despite being primarily physical (Georgios) and human (Nick) geographers, we greatly value this holistic stance. But as marketisation and employability demand ever-greater fragmentation of knowledges and skillsets, as academic workloads prioritise bureaucracy and recruitment, and as Geography departments verge on closure, the promise of this holistic UK Geography looks less and less recoverable. In this session we frame these issues via the deteriorating situation of teaching and researching Geography in a small, low-status UK university. We outline the threats we face based on this wider context, discuss commonalities with situations in other UK HE institutions, and present a radical plan to recover Geography which will probably get everyone into a lot of trouble 😊
A Student Perspective on Changing Pedagogic Cultures Beyond COVID-19: Communication, Collaboration, and Compassion

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Abstract

As the multifaceted impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be remedied and recede from direct view, we come to a critical juncture at Newcastle University and beyond as we decide what Geography as a discipline and a community can learn from our experiences. Through the unprecedented rupturing of taken-for-granted pedagogic approaches, new spaces have opened up to allow innovative architectures of communication, care, and knowledge cultivation. We reflect on Newcastle University’s taught Geography programmes to discuss how the transformations experienced here might shed a positive light on opportunities to centre an ethics of care in alternative and resilient futures.

Through emphasis on student-led architectures of collaboration, deliberation over best practice in teaching, feedback, encouragement and extra-curricular engagement becomes increasingly accessible and inclusive. Thus, it is useful to reflect on how this approach built a resilient scaffolding for persevering through crisis through a commitment to democracy and reciprocity that empowers student priorities and voices. Furthermore, we might also recognise the benefits yielded by these more tangible structural shifts by considering their potential beyond simply providing a means of managing the acute impacts of academic disruption. Through personal experience of partaking in a final year Human Geography module, we consider how these wider changes served to flatten traditional power dynamics, facilitate more democratic and engaged dialogue amongst staff and students, and nurture more compassionate, flexible, and caring learning communities. The applicability of these approaches may differ based on the diversity of Geography departments nation-wide, but the values and attitudes given attention here provide food-for-thought as we step into the new decade.
Do School Gardens Cultivate Resilience?

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Abstract

Much has been made of the impact of COVID-19 on school children, with both popular and academic sources documenting alarming accounts of declining educational attainment and increasing social and emotional distress. One causative factor has been the wrenching transition from in-school to online learning early in the pandemic then back again to the classroom 18 months later. Especially hard hit have been students of color from low-income families. At the same time, however, a growing body of literature documents how school gardens contribute significantly to gains in students’ social and emotional well-being and academic achievement fostering anxiety-reduction from the pressures of school and daily life. Our paper presentation will discuss how school gardens can function as an ameliorative to the COVID disaster by offering opportunities for developing self-reliance and a sense of purpose in children. Our research asks: do school gardens build resilience in K-12 students who have experienced the multiple traumas of COVID-induced pandemic schooling in combination with the adverse childhood experiences that often beset children of color from economically marginalized families? During the 2021-22 academic year and using a quasi-experimental design, we studied 140 students from seven classrooms in four schools in Tucson, Arizona: two schools with long-term gardens and two without and garden exposure. The research team consists of two geographers, an educational psychologist and a school counselor who are all involved in the full reach of the study. We also work with a community advisory board. Our research methods include both an assessment tool that measures resilience and a school year-long ethnography undertaken by all four researchers. Our results will be shared through academic papers, local and state government directed policy briefs and with the community through videos, garden events.
Community Organising in Higher Education: Activist Geographies Beyond Community Engaged Learning

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Abstract

As “strong societal actors,” universities are in a unique position to channel higher education assets, including student learning, into people-powered social change as a form of ‘democracy from below’. This potential is partially borne out in emerging forms of community engaged learning (CEL). Various terms are used to describe what is pedagogically distinct within new trends of credit-bearing CEL in higher education. This has led to confused priorities, not least between teachers in different disciplines, career services, and university managers. Some forms of CEL enable and empower students to challenge structural inequalities - but only where conceived and applied as a theory and method of social change. That is, where the pedagogic intention is to advance student activist goals to deliver tangible change, mobilising ‘purpose’ and ‘passion’.

In this paper, I make the case for introducing community organising (CO) to undergraduate geography education. The idea of CO is for people with shared interests to take on established positions of power, such as elected member of parliament, and heads of large public and private bodies. A broad-based alliance of civil society organisations (such as faith, education, trade union and marginalised community groups) can use community organising methods to tackle a wide variety of issues such as climate change, housing, public health, poverty, discrimination, and many others. Drawing on empirical highlights from a four-year partnership with a regional chapter of Citizens UK “the home of community organizing” (Citizens UK website), I consciously shift the discourse of CEL from acquiring skills and performing ‘charity’ to demonstrate the mutually transformative benefits of CO methods for students and external partners that spill over to civil society ‘people power’.
Abstract

In response to the lockdowns of the Covid-19 pandemic I walk into existence an imaginary island within my home city of Newcastle upon Tyne. In lockdown one I walk from my house, for up to 30 minutes in any and every direction. My walking makes Contención Island; I walk until easing begins - 42 days. In lockdown two I walk 28 shoreline sections of the island and, by so doing, mark the 28 days of lockdown. Over the 83 days of lockdown three I walk to places selected using chance operations and record the sounds of the island. On these 153 occasions I record my embodied walking using sound, poetry and line. The sounds play as the accompaniment to my walking my island. Poetry and line are formed into three scrolls; writing is political comment and observation, reading becomes an act of remembering and re-creation of the walks.
“I don’t care about tomatoes”: Edible commons in Girona between urban utopias and power dynamics

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Abstract

Urban agriculture has been traditionally envisaged as an opportunity to contest the neoliberal dogma and promote alternative social-ecological imaginaries. The bulk of the literature on this topic focuses on bottom-up experiences. More nuanced accounts, however, point out to the potential of top-down initiatives for creating new urban commons. This paper focuses on the case of a municipal initiative in the neighbourhood of Sant Narcis (Girona, Spain) to create an "edible neighbourhood": Menja’t Sant Narcís (Eat Sant Narcís). While the project emerges as a municipal top-down project, its development is currently shaped by a multitude of grassroots movements and community organisations. Using mixed methods of participatory research, discourse and historical analysis, the paper traces the difficult dynamics of creating taking care of commons at the intersection of vertical and horizontal dynamics of power. We look at the tensions between groups and actors and how different (current and historical) ‘imagined communities' shape the evolution of the project. We ask who is included and who is not in the new community and why? What are the storylines/ utopias (the neoliberal vs. commons) which strive to dominate the design and evolution of the project? To what extent is Sant Narcís an intermediate terrain of co-production of urban commons, where “entanglements between informal practices and institutions” generate practices of “situated commoning”?
Why we must tackle the misunderstanding, misrepresentation and marginalisation of biodiversity in decision-making if we are to enable nature’s recovery

Emma Gardner
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Abstract

Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate around the globe due to the appropriation of land (and sea) for human-centric uses. This is already leading to loss of ecosystem functioning, with knock-on negative effects for human health and wellbeing. As a result, governments are increasingly pledging to ‘bend the curve’ of biodiversity decline and set targets for nature’s recovery. There is a recognition that the needs of non-human species have not been adequately taken into account and this must change.

In the UK, the new Biodiversity Net Gain policy is ostensibly designed to address this, while the Natural Capital concept is intended to give non-human entities/processes greater representation in human decision-making. Through a series of case study examples, we illustrate how these can perpetuate fundamental misunderstandings and marginalisation of biodiversity, how they are already failing to represent the needs of local species, how monetary valuations can actually impede good decision-making and how we are in real danger of preserving artificial biodiversity metrics rather than biodiversity itself. We also illustrate striking parallels between the way biodiversity is being treated by emerging ‘biodiversity offsetting’ concepts and the forced historic clearances of underrepresented human communities.

We set out the essential systemic changes that are needed to convert the words of the UK Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan into actions that genuinely benefit biodiversity. Ranging from planning system reform and education to the integration of local vernacular knowledge, we identify the processes needed to finally give biodiversity independent and effective representation in decision-making.
A Gentle Journey Around my Home: Taking Care with Psychogeography in a Time of Pandemic

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Abstract

Navigating the boundaries of social research within the home can often be a messy recipe to follow. Even more so when a pandemic becomes thrown into the mix. COVID-19 and the fluctuating UK Government’s social distancing measures continually disrupt our homelives, requiring extra care and compassion as geographers continue to dance with the domestic socio-spatial impact(s). In acknowledgement, this presentation reflects on my Masters dissertation research undertaken in 2020 during the first partial national lockdown enforced by the UK Government, exploring the novel assembly of a gentle psychogeographic walking/mapping approach within ‘my’ family home. (1) Firstly, drifting away from aggressive and spectacular notions of contemporary psychogeography; (2) Secondly, performing as a critical and creative autoethnographic method that helps reflexively sense and re-map the potential potencies and affordances performing within the home; (3) Lastly, re-emphasising the importance of taking care with those who share our homes, including ourselves as researchers.
Abstract

Tell the Truth. Act Now. Be the Change. Extinction Rebellion’s (XR) three central aims focus on intervention in the present to secure a better climate future for all. These demands exemplify how activism is driven by an urgent desire for a future otherwise. Through participatory painting interviews with XR activists, this paper explores imagined climate futures by asking: What types of futures circulate in the spaces of climate activistisms? What tone do claims about the future take? Is the future met with optimism, despair, anger or resignation? And, who populates these future worlds? Drawing on the work of Elizabeth Grosz and Kara Keeling, I explore these questions through the creation of a speculative, creative methodology that endeavours to stay with the excessive and affective. Together these authors articulate art practice as productive of futures not preordained by, or contained in, the past or the present. In the context of impending ecological breakdown, this conceptualisation may offer activists a new mode for imagining truly radical eco-futures which do not succumb to the depoliticising effects of environmentalism. Unlike the majority of methods in the social sciences which seek to measure, recognise or narrate phenomena, this painting method is an attempt to perceive that which surpasses its expression, to follow the excessive and allow for the imperceivable to resonate. An endeavour at apprehension rather than comprehension, perception rather than recognition, an attempt to perceive that which cannot be known.
Machine Learning applied to the assessment of vulnerability to coastal erosion

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Abstract

Coastal vulnerability (CV) assessment is a useful tool to support the decision-making and the better management of the coastal zones and their resources. The number of variables/indicators, variability of landscapes and ecosystem services result in a challenge to assess the vulnerability of the coast. The data set used in CV assessment has predominantly multiple scales and dimensions. The models usually do not consider bias and uncertainty of the results. In this context, the application of Machine Learning (ML) techniques may offer insights and predictions with attenuated unbiased results. ML is already used in coastal studies, but there are few records on CV analysis. Bayesian Network is a ML technique implemented to solve problems that require data assimilation. Therefore, the present study aims to forecast the areas of generating or aggravation of coastal erosion. By testing the feasibility of the Bayesian Network application to improve a CV assessment in order to carry out predictions of shoreline changes and identify the output uncertainty. It is expected that the present results offer an alternative way to support the construction of a CV model that assembles physical, social and ecosystem variables.
The Spatial Characteristics of Challenge: disruptive modes of citizen participation in the smart city context

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Abstract

Situated within urban design, this presentation explores spatial manifestations of activism as citizen participation in innovation environments within smart urbanism, with its embedded technologies harvesting data for both urban management and city development (mobility/transport, environment/sustainability, security and wellbeing). It lays out a hypothesis that, framed within discourses of innovation, academic models of citizen participation in smart urbanism fail to reflect contestation and challenge because they do not recognise them as valorised contributions to how ideas develop outside those normative consultation techniques considered as participation by professionals. In addition, existing models fail to express the relationality of actors within and outside of the power and control structures of innovation as well as socio-political and spatial movements suggested by constant negotiation and contestation around the justification and validity of policy and practice. Preliminary research reveals activist outsiders operating at the interface between those professional communities of practice involved in developing the smart city and a citizenry most often engaged as simply data contributors. Operating from the margins, these radical facilitators act to continually produce temporary ‘spaces of challenge’ in which to contest the enactment of innovation, the direction of development (of the smart city, its delivery, and its ethics) as well as the expectations of participatory practice. This work-in-progress interdisciplinary research aims to identify the socio-spatial configurations of spaces of challenge as sites of disruptive participatory practice to revisit the geo-political of innovation through a lens of the production of both space and knowledge.
Ecosystem-based spatial models in assessing coastal vulnerability: a few lessons learned in Southern Brazil

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Abstract

Reaching true integration in assessing coastal vulnerability is not an easy task. It involves not only detecting vulnerable areas in terms of the physical variables, but also assessing current and potential social, economic, and environmental losses, which could be translated into ecosystem services losses. Ecosystem-based approaches emerge as an alternative to concatenate data of different scales and fields. Thus, the goal of this work is to present and discuss some initiatives and applications of spatial models with potential to support coastal adaptation. This includes combining existing InVEST models and new spatial metrics. The later aim to depict some social aspects using broad classes of beneficiaries as a proxy. Study cases vary in scale, from local to regional. In general, the ecosystem-based part of the analysis does not change in structure due to scale, but it does require adjustments in defining ecosystem and beneficiaries, that means, a quasi-quantitative and spatial adjustment. The natural vulnerability component, on the other hand, requires that the input spatial data match the final cartographic scale. Despite the difficulties to obtain suitable datasets, in all cases we see advantages and advances in making the best use of the information available and in communicating results.
Democratizing Biotechnological Innovation in Community Science Labs

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Abstract

In the last decade or so, biotechnology resources (e.g. lab equipment, DNA sequencing) have become more easily accessible and progressively cheaper than ever before. This has allowed experiments and innovation with biotechnology to occur in spaces, most prominently community science labs, which operate outside of mainstream scientific labs in academia and industry. Communities in these alternative labs often espouse values and aspirations defined in contrast to norms, cultures and incentives established by mainstream science. As such, these are spaces where biotechnology may be ‘democratized’, and where innovation can occur in a more open and distributed way. In the last few years, a global movement has emerged, in which they have developed their own visions, ethical priorities, and handbooks.

This paper will analyze these efforts to democratize biotechnological innovation by drawing on ethnographic research undertaken in two prominent community science labs (Counter Culture Labs and BioCurious), located on opposite ends of the San Francisco Bay Area. It will examine and compare the dynamics and practices of innovation both within these community science labs, and also the multi-scalar factors and processes that affect innovation from beyond these labs. In doing so, this paper identifies the opportunities and challenges associated with developing alternative approaches to innovation within biotechnology, whilst also gesturing towards broader geographical dynamics important to consider when assessing prospects for alternative models of innovation more generally.
Feeling the Breach: Imagining the Unimaginable through Purple

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Abstract

On 22 May 2018, Ed Hawkins, the lead author of the IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report, published a chronologically ordered series of ‘Warming Stripes’ that, he hoped, would communicate simply and effectively to the public the accelerating rate of global warming. Presented with no additional detail, the visual relies on the colour of each stripe to represent the temperature of a single year, and is ordered from the earliest available data at each location to now. While the data used can vary across scale and space, what is consistent is the use of a spectral colour scale to indicate temperature: blue for colder, red for warmer. The viral visual of Warming Stripes edges towards a blackening red to signal dangerous conditions. But, there are indications that its designer may turn to the purple to signal the breach of climate change. There is precedent here for imagining the unimaginable, as the traditional weather map that Hawkins’ temperature-colour visual draws from has already begun to feel the heat. Here, an incandescent purple is increasingly being used to indicate extreme temperatures. This purple blisters on screen like a live welt. Unsettling the notion of an ‘intuitive’ human sense of the heat of a colour, this presentation foregrounds the tensions between painterly debate on the aesthetic work of purple and a cartographic endeavour to box the perfect purple to signal a breach in the world. And, lays out some of the ramifications of this tension for the making and remaking of warning systems.
The Geographies of Virtual Production: the possibilities and limitations of production innovation in the film and TV industry

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Abstract

Virtual production (VP) is a new way film and TV is being made. It is achieving widespread recognition and awareness because of hits such as Disney’s ‘The Mandalorian’, the BBC’s Olympic coverage and Netflix’s ‘The Midnight Sky’. VP has been hailed as innovative as it offers more flexible production methods, and a technofix with the potential to make film and TV carbon neutral. Using videogames technologies to capture computer-generated environments in real-time, VP offers huge flexibility in production workflows and reduces the need to fly to film on location. Remote cooperation is also key, which offers the potential to shift the geographies of where film and TV is made. However, questions remain about whether VP’s innovation can fundamentally address film and TV’s dirty secrets of long-standing equality, diversity, and inclusivity (EDI) issues, a mental health crisis and endemic overwork. The significant issue here - which will be addressed in this paper - is if virtual production - as this new innovation - offers potentials for addressing these problems within the screen industries, or if it will further entrench the industry’s structural inequalities and continued issues of sustainability. The paper draws on work being undertaken as part of an ongoing research project being conducted by XR Stories (at the University of York) which offers one of the first critical examinations into the geographies of virtual production on a global scale.
The dawn of urban artificial intelligence: lights and shadows

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most radical and innovative technologies in contemporary history. Although it has a clear digital dimension connected to ethereal elements such as algorithms and the Internet, AI has also a strong materiality which is already visible and tangible in many cities. Urban artificial intelligences, like autonomous cars, drones, service robots and city brains, are rapidly becoming a prominent feature of the shape and governance of the late 21st century city. On the one hand, their emergence is linked to well-known practices of smart urbanism. On the other hand, however, urban AI manifests capabilities that goes well beyond smart, both empirically and theoretically. This paper focuses on the most innovative aspects of urban AI, by comparing traditional smart tech with novel AI tech as it is emerging in contemporary urban spaces. For instance, it examines the differences between automation and autonomy, to count and to account, confined spaces and real-life environments, medium and agent in urban governance, and it sheds light on the temporal ambition of urban AI which, unlike smart urbanism, strives to capture the future of the city rather than the real-time city. Upon portraying the innovation that characterizes urban AI, the paper critically discusses the new challenges that the city is facing in the age of AI, offering conceptual tools and a vocabulary to understand the urbanity of AI and its impact on present and future cities.
Geography for the future: making synergies, enabling change

Megan Palmer-Abbs
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Abstract

It is generally accepted that Innovation is a way of improving our current circumstances, whether this be through social, organisational, technological, process, etc. However, innovation is not a ‘panacea for all ills’ and, if applied in an ad hoc way, can undermine the very change it was intended to achieve, leading to failure. In addition, there is a growing trend for responsible innovation, one which looks at the wider societal impacts and context, beyond the techno centric or business innovation (Salvatori et al, 2019; Peralta and Gismera, 2021). This responsible innovation has never been more important than now with a pressing need to deliver sustainable circular development (Ellen MacCarthur, 2022). Unpicking complexity is critical to understanding the world around us and moving towards more sustainable and circular ways of working and living. From healthcare to local food production, new economic paradigms to more circular products and services, technology change to policy and organisational change - Innovation has become a buzz word! The interest and role of human geographers in contextualising these complex ‘wicked’ problems is growing (Lengyel et al, 2020). But what exactly is the role of geographers within ‘spaces’ of innovation and problem solving? This paper presents some take away learnings from a selection of applied research projects where geography has played key role in generating success.

Drawing on several projects this paper seeks to present 1) The relevance of geography, 2) The synergy of skills and methods, 3) Our role in contextualising innovation effectively, 4) Responsible innovation at work.
Exhausting possibility: Boredom and the non-event of climate change

Ben Anderson
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Abstract

What does climate change become when encountered through a boredom ever intimate with climate anxiety, dread, doom, and other affects of catastrophe here and to come? And what might staying with an affect which, for now, we will name as ‘boredom’ tell us about the type of event-condition climate change might be for some subjects in the context of crisis, emergency and catastrophe as dominant structures of feeling in a too intense present? The paper speculates about these questions by staying with scenes from the UK and North-America in which being bored or claiming to be bored performs a detachment, a felt turning away, from all that climate change is and threatens to bring. I show how ordinary acts and claims of boredom before climate change exhaust possibility, make the overwhelming event into a non-event, and reopen the possibility of positive affect in the present. Climate change boredom might, then, be understood as part of a genealogy of collective anaesthetic practices which parry the impress of an overwhelming world. But as well as rendering the present inhabitable, climate boredom is also a way some subjects have learnt to detach from the urgency of emergency claims and their hopes of justice and change. Boredom can be an affective means through which injustices and harms and damages endure and intensify. Detachment is, though, always a precarious achievement, particularly so for climate change. Scenes of boredom quickly change. Dread or doom or anxiety return or newly emerge. The resulting mixture of the flat and intense, boredom and its others, is exemplified through scenes of ‘doomscrolling’. I conclude by reflecting on the politics of climate affects we might not yet have names for.
Climate responses and social innovation in urban areas: case studies from Lusophone Africa

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Abstract

Academic research and policy is now focused on innovation in rapidly urbanising cities for addressing the societal challenge of climate change, yet within the ideas of urban innovation that dominate these climate responses, a more comprehensive picture of social innovation in relation to context in which they are happening is missing. As such, in response to recent global social demands for urgent action on climate change, more wide-ranging perspectives on social innovation are needed. To help build that comprehensive social innovation picture, empirically grounded in mapping and analysing different initiatives in two Lusophone African countries, Angola and Mozambique, this paper explores the existing social innovations to respond to climate change in these urban environments. These distinct case studies represent different patterns of local climate change action associated with international climate change commitments. Such an empirical focus on overlooked contexts of action and initiatives that are often unnoticed bring about and reflect the experiences of ordinary cities and cities beyond the global North. In discussing the ways in which social innovations are mobilised and consolidated, innovations for climate change that suit the needs of rapidly growing urban areas emerge. Thus, made visible and brought to the fore is the diversity of social innovation and how they contribute to different forms of social innovation in climate responses in urban environments thereby generating new ideas and frameworks for climate change governance in urban areas.
Towards gender justice in digital innovation: From inclusion to supporting change and change makers

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Abstract

In the digital inclusion literature, as well as the field of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), women have frequently been framed as late adopters of digital innovation (Buskens & Webb 2009). The literature has been largely silent on non-binary people (Sambuli et al. 2018). Digital innovations are designed frequently by men (Kwami et al. 2011), frequently with a western bias (Hicks 2013), and implicated in global racial power relations. Women are included as users, but rarely as co-designers (Jimenez 2018; Mungai et al. 2019).

The GCRF GeDIA Project (Gender-Justice in Digital Innovation in Africa, www.gedia-network.org) co-developed a research and action agenda to change this and to center women (and non-binary people) as co-creators of digital innovation. It brought together 17 partners across 7 countries: universities as well as Oxfam, Malala Fund, INIIT Kenya, Asikana Network women in IT in Zambia, and Codespace South Africa. A three-pronged approach focused on i) online activism; ii) Fair access for women and girls to careers in IT and Data Science, and iii) new gender-just design methodologies.

In 8 online workshops a joint research agenda emerged, resulting in a research grant from IDRC Canada (2022-2024). GeDIA Academy was a peer-mentorship programme for early-career female African researchers. The project partnered with Data Science Africa for their 2021 Summer School (online), focused on gender equality. 534 participants from 25 African countries participated, 51% were women (up from 30% prior), and 3 non-binary participants.

In our paper, we reflect on the complex yet highly rewarding collective process of developing a feminist, intersectional approach to digital innovation. This process negotiated the meaning of gender across countries/cultures, of innovation across disciplines, as well as the divergent cultural resonances and political feasibilities of gender justice.
Between Barad and Rancière: The political aesthetics of a More-Than-Human Emancipatory Politics?

Ben Bowsher
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Abstract

For many thinkers, the climate crisis is emblematic of the Anthropocene, the new epoch we find ourselves in. The Anthropocene denotes the point at which humans have transgressed the safe operating boundaries of the planet or ‘nature’. In turn, phenomena like the increasing occurrence of ‘extreme’ weather events disrupt the common sense of Modern thought which delimits a hard distinction between the agency of thinking man and the passive, malleability of the ‘natural’ world. How do we rethink the possibility for emancipatory politics—traditionally highly anthropocentric concepts—in a world where our entanglements with nonhuman agencies have come to make the anthropocentric gaze impossible?

This paper develops a novel theoretical framework for engaging with the Anthropocene as a moment of radical political possibility. Bringing together the de-anthropocentred ontology of Barad and the aesthetic political theory of Rancière, it attempts to develop tools for locating and analysing a more-than-human emancipatory politics. On the one hand, Barad’s approach opens up the possibility that the world could be otherwise in more-than-human terms, but leaves the question of the concrete materialisation of these possibilities untheorised. On the other hand, Rancière’s aesthetic distinction between practices of policing and politics—as well as his focus on ‘wrong’ as the founding condition for politics—gives Barad’s work the necessary fangs locate and analyse how these possibilities might be materialised through emancipatory political struggles. I argue that it is by locating and analysing these concrete manifestations of political struggle that we begin to find meaningful and transformative responses to the conditions of the Anthropocene.
Mosquito coils, unequal urbanization, and the futurity of our climate

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Abstract

Aedes aegypti, the primary vector for dengue and zika, breeds mainly in stagnant water in tropical countries. Studies have warned that climate change, in conjunction with urbanization, could drive the proliferation of Ae. aegypti, with major consequences for public health. In the global South the proliferation of Ae. aegypti is underpinned by processes of unequal urbanization. By 2020 low-income residents, amounting to half of the total population living in southern cities, did not access piped water and had to buy/collect and store water. Stored water provides mosquitoes with a habitat to reproduce. Besides water, Ae. aegypti needs humans to breed and exposes day-biting behaviors aligned with human-household activity. They take shelter and feed inside homes despite human attempts to eradicate them.

In this article, I use the mosquito coil, a spiral-shaped insecticide, as an entry point into the realities presented by climate crisis in the urban global south. I have chosen the coil, an incense made into a spiral, based on pyrethroids and other insecticides, sold widely and at low-cost in neighborhood stores. The coil smolders inside bedrooms and living-rooms producing smoke. This object takes us on a multisensory experience: the strong smell of the insecticide, the sound of the burning coil, the persistent mosquito noises, the eye irritation caused by smoke, the skin itchiness caused by mosquito bites, and the fear of dengue/zika. The coil, represents the connection between water, mosquitoes, human bodies, and insecticides and marks my entry point into a reflection on the ways in which many urban south residents experience climate change. The spiral invites us to decentralize the ways in which we know climate change and to understand the differentiated effects of climate change and think about ways of recovery.
The mind of climate apartheid

Andrew Baldwin
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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to think psychoanalytically about what many nowadays call ‘climate apartheid’. Climate apartheid is a concept used in green criminology, urban studies, and in scholarly and activist discourses on climate justice to designate a global structure of segregation that consolidates a racialised distinction between privilege and precarity as a response to the climate crisis. Examples of climate apartheid would include, for example, urban enclaves in climate vulnerable locations alongside the systematic expulsion of the poor, or bordering and citizenship regimes that regulate the differential mobilities of people depending on how they are positioned in a racial hierarchy. The paper seeks to expand critical evaluation of ‘climate apartheid’ by examining the production of what we might call ‘the mind of climate apartheid’. To do so the paper draws on Derek Hook and Jonathan Coetzee’s respective psychoanalytical readings of ‘the mind of apartheid’. For these writers, the Apartheid system should be grasped not simply as a system of racial segregation structuring South African society from 1948 to 1991, but as a geographic expression of an historically specific psychic disposition at the core of which is an anxiety about the ‘undifferentiated’ and racial mixing. Coetzee would describe this disposition using Freud’s psychoanalytic diagnosis of the obsessive-neurotic. While Hook would seize on Coetzee’s characterisation of the mind of apartheid to launch his own ‘critical psychology of the postcolonial’ and psychoanalysis of race. The paper draws from both writers to consider how the psyche and the political converge to produce a historically specific political psychology in ‘the mind of climate apartheid’. The aim of the paper is to place insights from the psychoanalysis of race into dialogue with debates about climate apartheid in order to consider whether and how the historically formed ‘mind of climate apartheid’ might be conceived as a legitimate site for political and anti-racist contestation in the struggle for climate justice.
Cultivating responsibility in distributed innovations

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Abstract

It is increasingly argued that all innovation processes are distributed. Far from being linear state-, STEM- or entrepreneur-led processes, many innovations are significantly shaped and sometimes led by more diverse sets of actors, including users. Furthermore, the scope of what are understood as examples of innovation is changing, including innovations in use of technologies, social innovations, deliberately low-tech innovations, practices and tasks relating to the maintenance of existing innovations, and the application of existing technologies and approaches to new contexts and purposes.

Conceptualising innovations as part of broader distributed processes also opens up new conceptualisations of, and approaches to, public engagement with innovations. Conventional approaches to public engagement with innovation rely on limited windows for public input, framing citizens as either potential users whose needs and behaviours need to be understood as an input to innovation processes, or as potential opponents whose attitudes towards a ready-to-market innovation need to be understood and corrected. If innovation processes are distributed then there are multiple ways for citizens to engage, including user research, everyday use, forms of resistance and protest, and leading innovation processes.

This paper develops and illustrates a conceptualisation of distributed innovation processes using examples of energy and clothing related innovations, and considers what this means for conventional approaches to responsible innovation. Suggestions are offered for how we might better cultivate responsibilities across distributed innovation processes.
Weathering Waterways in England and New England

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Abstract

Drawing on human geography and feminist new materialisms, weathering has emerged as a new praxis to enable individuals to ‘bring climate change home’. The theory encourages us to think of individuals as bodies that are moving through a landscape that contains imprints of past climates, that is constantly shaped by present weather, and through which future climates are always being made. Climate and climate change are considered both real and imaginary, material and political, and simultaneously local and global. This project presents the results of one weathering exercise, a collaboration between artists and academics in England (London) and New England (Armidale, New South Wales). Through guided walks along Dumeresq Creek in Armidale and the hidden River Fleet in London, participants in the Weathering Waterways walk are encouraged to reflect on shared histories of trade and resource use, on the dual and related challenges of climate change and indigenous sovereignty, and on the ultimate goal of efforts to address climate change.
Where Monks Meet Jedi: The Architecture of Exile on Ireland’s Skellig Michael

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Abstract

In the final scene of the 2015 film Star Wars: The Force Awakens, the character Rey arrives at an island on a remote planet hidden at the edge of the galaxy. There, she encounters Luke Skywalker, a man seeking refuge and isolation at this forgotten outpost. In the subsequent film, we learn that the island was once host to a temple of “jedi” whose memory remains visually present through the preservation of their ancient stone dwellings. Both of these films were shot on-location at Skellig Michael, an island off the southwest coast of Ireland. The stone dwellings presented in the film were no work of fiction or set design; they were built by Gaelic monks who established a monastery on the island in the 6th century A.D. Since then, Skellig Michael has evolved into a protected bird sanctuary, UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a popular tourist destination for both history-lovers and Star Wars film fans alike.

In this presentation, we intend to connect the historical and pop-cultural identities of the island by focusing on the island’s monastic architecture as an expression of spiritual destination. In order to do this, we will analyze the role of the dwellings and spaces as they connect to the monks who erected and inhabited them as well as how they are represented thematically across the Star Wars films. Additionally, we will discuss the appeal felt by travelers who subsequently visit the island either historically as a representation of religious geographic history or as a function of film site tourism.

Using historical site and film analysis as well as on-site accounts, we will explore religious expression activated by the architecture of Skellig Michael from the perspectives of both ancient and modern cultures who traveled to the island.
Interstitial Recovery: From Abandoned Spaces to Relational Places in Turkey’s Rural Geographies

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Abstract

Neoliberal policies continue to promote rapid urbanization on a global scale, with inevitable consequences for state policies leading to the acute distinction between urban and rural. Under such pressure, along with the withering of the state, neoliberal approaches in the context of centralizing education eventually had resonances in Turkey’s rural lands; steering educational facilities from the peripheries towards the center which emptied those peripheries in return. This paper takes on from rural geographies in Turkey touched by this uneven development and explores approaches to revive abandoned structures to enhance education and community engagement through spatial responses. The paper reviews the practices of Herkes İçin Mimarlık (HIM), a collective whose practice on abandoned rural structures is a demonstration of how the right to the city surpasses by large the urban itself and evolves into the right to the rural by demonstrating that the countryside is no more an exclusive place, but a place of confrontations under the forces of urbanization. HIM’s focus on abandoned structures is a depiction of under what circumstances architectural artefacts can be deprived of their use value and become spatial excess due to being removed out of the state mechanisms of production, and how consecutively, those dysfunctional structures can turn into potential sites of recovery. The paper argues HIM’s approaches to be an ‘interstitial recovery’ when reviewed from three perspectives: first, identification of rural properties owned, yet abandoned by the state and their recovery under state’s supervision; second, operations undertaken in the physical recovery of these spaces intrinsic to, yet transcending the disciplinary boundaries; and third, recovery in the form of a social rehabilitation carried with rural inhabitants together with HIM members who are outsiders to rural localities.

Engaging with phenology to understand more-than-human climate change temporalities

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Abstract

Many scholars have argued that the climate crisis is in part a problem of time, with ecological, political and social systems thought to be out of sync or mistimed. Discussions of time and environment are often interdisciplinary, necessitating a wide-ranging use of methods and approaches. However to date there has been little to no engagement from humanities or the social sciences with the scientific field of phenology, the scientific study of life cycle timing across species, including plants, animals and insects. In this paper I will discuss findings from a new field philosophy project that works with ecologists and citizen scientists to ask ‘what is time?’ via the study of phenology. I will suggest that phenology can offer environmental humanities scholars novel inroads to thinking through temporal relations across species and environments. Drawing on Elaine Gan and Anna Tsing’s (2018) interest in the way time participates in processes of ‘how things hold’ I’m interested in how the flexibility of time and timing, issues at the heart of phenology, play a role in adaptation to change. What can we learn about the range of temporal strategies that plants, animals, fungi and others use to respond to changing climates, and what can we learn from them? In particular, given that there has been few forays into the world of phenology from a social and cultural geography perspective, what kinds of research possibilities might open up from more interdisciplinary conversations? In sum, this paper will propose phenology as a novel and fascinating avenue for thinking about the role of time in multispecies efforts to recuperate, repair and transform in a time of climate change.
Native Hawaiians and the Housing Question: Colonization, Racial Capitalism, and Resistance

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Abstract

The Native Hawaiian housing question has been inadequately analyzed. It is widely known that Hawaiians currently suffer from a host of housing problems including disproportionately high rates of facility problems, overcrowding, and homelessness. However, the causes of such conditions and any recommendations for planning cannot be discussed without considering the many interpretations planning agents may have of the processes behind housing issues and their remedies. This approach is historical, accounting for Native Hawaiians' dispossession and subsequent top down, racist policies, but the very rapid evolution of these processes in the last 150 years warrants a particularly thorough inspection of the different angles this history and the future can be seen by. This paper is a case study drawing on multiple institutional perspectives on housing insecurity in Hawaii. We conducted interviews with multiple advocacy organizations, politicians, agency officials, activists, journalists, and other intellectuals. Such accounts are insightful for what interviewees share and also for what they do not share. This paper begins by reviewing colonial histories and the housing conditions of Hawaiians, analyzing descriptive statistics from government databases. We then use the interviews to understand how ongoing inter-racial conflict, colonization, racial capitalism in real estate, gentrification, and high housing prices, contribute to Hawaiians' housing situation today and what the solutions in each respective institution would be. We find that the lens of indigenous resistance – against, within, and in parallel to the US racial capitalist state – expands our conception of what possible solutions to the housing crisis might look like.
Managing the environment towards enhancing the resilience of the city Lagos, Nigeria, to the impact of climate change.

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Abstract

Cities across the world and especially in the developing countries are growing at alarming rates. It is estimated that by 2050, 68% of the global population will be in urban areas. Coastal cities even present a unique dimension of expansion. About three-fifths of the world population now lives within about 100 kilometres of the coast, and coastal cities are among the fastest growing population centres in the world. The probabilities of these cities getting damaged with serious consequences are also very high. Lagos in Nigeria is a typical coastal city with an enormous population. It has grown at an annual rate of 3.26% between 2015 and 2020 and is projected to have a population of 32.6 million by 2050. Apart from housing a growing proportion of the population of the world, cities are also the focus of the economy of many countries such as industrial, commercial, finance and recreational as in the case of Lagos. Cities are thus important areas to attract attention in reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The underlining focus of resilience building is ensuring that the various socio-economic and physical systems of a city are managed optimally and sustainably in the city to reduce or eliminate the negative consequences of its own growth which are being made worse by climate change. In this paper, two elements of the environment – weather and water resources are examined in terms of their management in the city of Lagos. Coastal weather information is crucial for planning and daily living, and the growing pressures on water resources due to population growth demands attention. Both of these two parameters are interrelated and overwhelmingly significant. The challenges associated with these are examined and the prospects for enhanced resilience of the city assessed.
Right to Farm Towns and Recovering an Imagined Past in the New England Countryside

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Abstract

Contradictions define the rural imaginary of the New England region of the United State’s Northeast. Taking “right to farm communities” in Central Massachusetts as a case study, this paper investigates how those contradictions increasingly give rise to a fraught and fractured political-economic landscape that belie what, precisely, should be “recovered” in a rural region. Historicized versions of the imaginary posit an ecologically stable, forested region tended by Indigenous inhabitants until European settler-colonists claimed, and violently remade, the land as the basis for yeoman-farmer communities, before becoming the hearth of American industrialism with mills at the heart of dozens of communities. In the present moment, Indigenous claims to land are still mostly met with ferocious resistance, agricultural lands remain under pressure from suburban housing development, industry has mostly departed, leaving behind a toxic legacy, although high-tech research campuses have become a popular attempt to lure economic development to some rural areas. Within this reality, rural towns maintain a remarkable amount of autonomy over their governance, and use a patchwork of policies including conservation easements, minimum lot sizes, and “right to farm” laws to preserve a rural appearance without foreclosing urban-focused economic development. Through a combination of document analysis, interviews and counter-cartography, this paper argues that these policies both reflect and reproduce rural imaginaries that maintain conservative ideologies flexibly deployed by actors ranging from pro-industrial farm interests to environmental advocates. It concludes by asking, in this milieu, what rural lives can be imagined that do not seek to reproduce an imagined past?
The Urbanisation of Meteorological Government: Extreme Weathering, Smart Weather and Atmospheric Engineering

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Abstract

This paper examines the increasing involvement of urban authorities, weather agencies and the private sector in the development of urban meteorological government. This provides the governance capacity, knowledge and expertise and modes of technological intervention to maintain life during weather related turbulence. The paper examines three trajectories supporting the technopolitical governance of urban weather. First, it reviews the foregrounding of the agency of ‘extreme weathering’ in systemically disrupting urban life, infrastructure and economies. Second, it explores the role of novel digitally enabled ‘smart weather’ platforms and products that generate micro-spatial and short term intelligence to more effectively predict and manage weather events. Third, it investigates the evolving bricolage of ‘atmospheric engineering’ involving new techniques, nature based services, and cooling technologies that re-engineer the urban milieu to produce perfect weather. To illustrate this the paper draws primarily on the problematic of overheating and explore how heat is increasingly intertwined with professional and disciplinary debates in urban resilience, smart cities and urban infrastructure studies. The article demonstrates the complex interplay of meteorological, digital and infrastructural knowledge and engineering with strategies that attempt to live with climate change by selectively disconnecting bodies and even entire districts from an increasingly hostile atmospheric commons.
Erosion and Progradation of the São Paulo Coast: analysis based on remote sensing big data and machine learning

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Abstract

The study presents the compartmentation of the São Paulo coast as a function of the position of the coastline over time, direction of the beach face, storm waves, and proximity to channels/estuaries using orbital remote sensing images and multivariate statistical analysis. The research pointed out that the coast presents a relative erosion trend, with an average of -1.8 m/year. The Toque-Toque - Tabatinga compartment is the most erosive and the Bertioga Toque-Toque compartment with a progradation tendency. The study also pointed out that the beaches with a tendency towards progradation are found mainly in the Bertioga - Toque-Toque compartment (C4). In contrast, the beaches with the most significant tendency to erosion are those with faces facing SE associated with the Ilha do Cardoso - Serra de Itatins (C1) and Praia Grande - Peruíbe (C2) compartments. Finally, the study brings, in a synoptic way and with different approaches, a better understanding of coastal dynamics on the São Paulo coast. Indicating which areas are most vulnerable to the loss of coastal protection ecosystem services and those that will suffer material and social damage from climate change if decision-makers do not present coastal adaptation efforts.
Re-assembling Tengtou: negotiating rural identity and perseverance in a Chinese metropolitan fringe

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Abstract

The promotional material for Tengtou describes it as ‘the most beautiful village in China’. To western eyes the claim is over-stretched. Tengtou lies hard against the city of Fenghua in Zhejiang Province, surrounded by an industrial landscape of ever-encroaching factories, power lines and road schemes. Neighbouring villages have been absorbed into the urban sprawl, but Tengtou resists, for now. This paper employs an assemblage methodology and evidence from intensive fieldwork to examine the transformation of Tengtou from an impoverished peripheral community to a buoyant globally-connected periurban locality. It argues that the metropolitan location of Tengtou has been critical to its economic boom, centred on a community-owned enterprise with 60 subsidiaries, but has also framed a defensive localism that is articulated through material and expressive components in the place-assemblage. The designation of half of the village territory as an eco-park has created a barrier to urban expansion, but also provides a platform for the representation and performance of particular, ideologically-situated ideas of rurality. At the same time, housing projects in the other half of the village introduce metropolitan standards of living but are aimed at keeping a rural community based on kinship together. Accordingly, the paper provides insights into the meaning of rurality in urbanizing and globalizing China, and its expression in a contested metropolitan landscape.
Triggers for change in farmers’ decision-making in European permanent grassland systems: understanding barriers and opportunities for sustainable land use and management

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Abstract

Permanent grasslands are the focus of current debates about the sustainable use and management of rural landscapes across Europe. They represent multi-beneficial landscapes that can store carbon, improve pollination, regulate water flow, prevent erosion and provide habitats, quality food and cultural value. However, permanent grasslands and the services they provide are under threat in many countries from a variety of activities and changes brought about by current environmental, social, economic and political pressures, including intensification, cultivation, urbanisation, afforestation, climate change and abandonment. New legislation applicable in Europe aimed at nature and landscape recovery, such as the EU ‘Green Deal’, and the Net Zero agenda in the UK, have opened up avenues for new standards of sustainable farming. Yet, how to achieve such standards on the ground and how to trigger the changes needed amongst competing agendas is often less than clear. Decisions made by farmers about permanent grassland can be influenced and constrained by economic and market conditions, legislation and land rights, and personal values, priorities and preferences for management. This study aims to understand the drivers and barriers faced by farmers of permanent grassland when making land use and land management decisions to identify the triggers for change. Based on a conceptual framing embedded in decision-theory, we conducted interviews with farmers from three types of farming systems (organic, extensive and intensive) across five European countries: Spain, UK, Sweden, Switzerland and Czech Republic (n=373). We explore how path dependency informs future farmers’ intentions to intensify or extensify farming practices; the role of perceived vulnerability and social norms in mediating decisions; and the constraints and dependencies for triggering change. Our comparative perspective has implications for understanding decision-making in differing contexts across Europe.
Climate Change Engage - co-designing educational resources to raise awareness of climate change and adaptation for learners 15 - 17 years using game design.

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Abstract

This paper presents the interdisciplinary project Climate Change Engage devised by members of UCD’s Earth Institute to collaboratively develop a ‘serious gaming’ instructional pack for secondary school students and their teachers. The project integrates knowledge from the arts, post-primary education, sciences, engineering and social sciences and builds on prior research (McKeown et al, 2022) that evidenced the need and importance of youth-led agency and the impact of youth-focused co-design.

The project sought to directly address this need by reflecting post-primary student perspectives on how to resolve complex climate mitigation and adaptation problems. The paper presents the co-design approach that explored how to enhance the agency and voice of students in confronting the challenges of climate change in a way that moves beyond standard modes of ‘participation’ to create a co-developed product.

Using an existing 5-day design sprint methodology (McKeown et al 2022) adapted for game design, the team worked with 16 sixteen-year-olds over the 5 days to support the students to develop games that addressed emerging themes from the team's expertise and the students' own knowledge. The paper presents an overview of the design sprint process and key findings around the project's key objectives

- to maximise the potential for deep learning about climate change related scientific and social concepts by resonating with divergent learning styles.
- to mobilise multi / interdisciplinary expertise and lay knowledges in co-developing an interactive heuristic with secondary school students and their teachers that synergistically address Sustainable Development Goal Targets 11.2 -11.7 and 13.1-13.3.

The project sought to co-develop a climate change problem-solving and educational resource as a suite of resources for schools across the nation. The paper concludes with reflections from the team and the students' learning process as they sought to co-develop a suite of downloadable materials to facilitate experiential learning with regard to UN Sustainable Development Goals numbers 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities) and 13 (Climate Change) and empower students to co-produce solutions to raise awareness of climate change and adaptation for learners 15 - 17 years using game design.
Rural gentrification through nature revitalisation? Explorations in a changing UK countryside

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Abstract

Recent years have seen growing public and policy acceptance of ideas of nature restoration and rewilding, alongside an expanding number of academic studies of rural gentrification (e.g. Lorenzen 2021; Nelson and Hines 2018; Phillips & Smith 2018; Phillips et al. 2021b; 2022; Smith et al. 2021; Sutherland 2022). The latter have included studies exploring gentrification within areas of wilderness (e.g. Smith et al. 2018; Méténier 2022), as well as studies stressing the significance of relations with nature or non-human actants (e.g. Phillips 2014; Phillips et al. 2021a; Sutherland 2021). Such studies can be seen to raise the possibility that heightened concerns with nature revitalisation and the enactment of practices of rewilding might work through, and indeed be stimulated by relations of rural gentrification. This paper explores this potentiality, through examining a series of cases of nature revitalisation and rewilding enacted within the UK. Attention is draw to the diverse forms that revitalisation and rewilding is currently taking within the UK, and differences within the human and more-than human agencies involved, as well as to lines of connection with practices that can be seen as both constitutive of, and potentially resistant or counter to, rural gentrification. Attention is draw to the human and non-human agents of transformation involved in different cases of nature revitalisation and rewilding, and also to the social as well as more-than human displacements constituted through these rural landscape transformations.
Emergent geographies of precarious housing commoning through and against dispossession

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Abstract

Transient and precarious forms of inhabitation are a distinctive feature of the intersection between housing and other dynamics of oppression. Precarity of home often make manifest multiple vulnerabilities but also ways of reworking inhospitable or outright unlivable places through self-organisation. With this paper I aim to present a theoretical and methodological reflection on the emergence (and precarious institutionalisation) of housing commoning from struggles against dispossession and for dignified housing and home. I approach housing dispossession as aporetic by examining the intersectional and longitudinal processes that produce disposability while also questioning taken-for-granted notions of property and personhood that underline rights-based discourse, to “think about dispossession as a condition that is not simply countered by appropriation” (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013: 19). I anchor this discussion through research into historical and contemporary geographies of self-organised housing commons in reclaimed vacant urban properties: the contested histories of short-life cooperatives in 1970s London, and occupation-based housing commons in post-2008 Barcelona. These two instances are brought together to comparatively illuminate the potential for dis/possessing collectivism (Roy, 2017), reformulations of ‘home’, especially through struggles around gender and racialized collective identities, and the centrality of interpersonal interdependency as opposed to individualizing institutional mechanisms and responses. The transient material and imagined forms of such emergent precarious housing commons may serve as a reminder of the generative power of collective inhabitation, and of the need for nuanced and situated scholarship that engages with the multiple needs and desires of those precariously housed.
Key techniques to address rural land in urban China: case study of regional renewal programme of urban villages in the Pearl River Delta

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Abstract

Within the past forty years, the Pearl River Delta (PRD) in China has maintained high-speed economic growth and become one of the largest metropolitan regions in the world with about 60 million population. As villages and farmland were gradually swallowed up by urban sprawl, a new type of space in the metropolitan area began to emerge, the urban village, in which collectively-owned rural land is surrounded by state-owned city land. When villagers continue to hold their land collectively and use it for accommodating internal immigrants, urban villages are usually depicted as congested, unsanitary space with high criminal rate. In order to locate the current urban renewal practices upon the urban villages in the PRD and to problematize the traditional urban-rural dual category, this paper uses a genealogical approach to look at how programmes, ideas and policies around urban villages come into being by focusing on the technique of urban land construction quota. The technique was at first utilized to divide urban-rural space and to contain urban expansion in the 1980s. While since 2009, with the creation of a new land category in the metropolitan transformative project, the space of urban village has been framed and understood as potential land resource for redeveloping, and thus become a solution for local government to continue its growth. It is found that the technique was firstly used to highlight and contribute to the distinction between urban and rural land, and later has been re-utilized for an urban-rural debordering process in the PRD.
Political geographies of State authority: Mapping power cultures in the multiverse

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Abstract

There is a growing sense that not only the limits of natural and energetic resources, but also of intellectual resources, are being reached. At the same time that a Crisis with massive health-related, social, economic, and environmental impacts appears increasingly closer, multiple States across the Globe are converging on an excessively small (yet probably misadjusted) set of principles and practices to legitimate, guide, and enact their roles. Such performances tend to lack rapport with the formidable threat that this Crisis represents, as they struggle with the complexity and diversity States invariably need to engage with.

The present research provides an analytical approach to political geographies of State authority that facilitates the engagement of complexity and diversity by mapping and embracing them. Mapping alternatives offers the potential of revealing new possibilities and less travelled – yet feasible and appealing – paths for Statecraft beyond Crisis formation. Based on a critical literature review, six analytical dimensions were selected for this mapping: i) the endorsed relationships between humans, Nature, time and death, ii) the narratives and visions that shape aspirational futures; iii) the institutional structures considered legitimate; iv) the stakeholders acknowledged as such; v) the forms of knowledge, description and analysis considered valid to guide judgements; vi) the actions, instruments, laws and procedures to be implemented.

Under the light provided by this analytical approach, six power cultures were mapped: indigenous, informal, antagonistic, positional, meritocratic, and eco-communitarian. After a critical analysis of this map is presented, some reflections on how both individuals and State agents navigate through plurality are provided. This will offer insights on how complex public decisions in general and policy dilemmas in particular emerge and are (or are not) resolved.
Contested space: exploring Sheffield’s urban-rural fringe in the context of growing development pressures

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Abstract

Whilst Sheffield, England (the ‘Steel City’) has an industrial legacy, it also has a strong historical and contemporary connection with the countryside. Around one third of Sheffield lies within the Peak District National Park with the associated moorland landscape forming a prominent visual backdrop across the west of the city. Sheffield is also relatively enclosed by greenbelt land, offering ready and valued rural connections for many of the city’s residents. For over half a century both the National Park and surrounding greenbelt have provided Sheffield a relative ‘hard boundary’. This has practically restricted development growth and simultaneously reinforced a shared cultural identity between associated urban and rural communities. However, with development pressures ever increasing this is causing a growing conceptual and actual contest over Sheffield’s urban-rural fringe. A range of community, political and professional stakeholders all offer different future visions of this space. This ranges from the (inherently) protective to the adaptive. This paper intends to unpack and explore the above, offering both the personal, ‘lived’ perspective of the researcher and their reflection as a professional town planner. Wider historic and contemporary narratives will also be drawn upon in the interest of finding any compromise over Sheffield’s urban-rural fringe.
A Map to Reach Utopia? Exploring shifting dynamics between spatial navigation and spatial imaginaries

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Abstract

It is widely acknowledged that the shift from mental and paper maps to digital maps for spatial navigation has been impactful in society. Mobility used to involve asking for directions, getting lost, and using city- or region-wide paper maps to navigate. Nowadays, it is increasingly common to discard those options in favour of interactive digital navigation devices, often operating on smartphones. These devices provide directions to follow the most efficient route, while using guiding trackers and offering voice instructions to prevent travellers from taking 'wrong turns' or random routes, diminishing chances of unplanned experiences and encounters on the way. Entire generations are emerging that exclusively experience this highly directive and techno-centric type of spatial navigation.

The above begs the still underexplored question of how such a shift affects the way future utopias are imagined and spatially characterized. Answers might provide meaningful insights into how utopias about urban life are related to 'smart' technologies. They may also provide clues about the vicious cycle between the development of increasingly digitalised spatial orientation practices and the emphasis on efficiency-oriented and accelerated lifestyles.

This contribution presents exploratory research on this theme. Interviews with academics and practitioners in the field of mobility planning provide insights into the common spatial orientation practices among these groups, their work practices and personal utopias, as well as their own perception on how these factors are related. By contacting respondents from the European South (Portugal, Spain, and Italy) and North (Netherlands, UK, and Norway), initial insights into cross-country variations are made possible. The exploratory results on the relationships between evolutions in spatial navigation and utopian aspirations are reflected on and connected to the relevant contemporary literature.
Greening the green belt? A planning policy assessment of the beneficial use of English green belts

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Abstract

Peri-urban areas are unique landscapes absent of targeted policy interventions which results in complex, messy and misunderstood spaces between the metropolis and the countryside. However, one such policy which does exist is green belt (GB), which focuses on preserving openness and preventing sprawl, and has remained largely unchanged since 1988. Researchers and practitioners have called for changes to GBs to better capture multifunctional benefits for urban and rural populations. In England key policy hooks do exist in the National Planning Policy Framework for promoting the benefits from GB including paragraphs 145; where “local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use”. Yet, it is unclear how this is built into and accounted for in planning policy.

To address this research and policy gap, a bespoke content-based policy assessment tool has been developed and applied to a selection of English local planning authorities (LPAs) to investigate how concepts of multifunctionality, ecosystem services and place-based approaches are applied to GBs. We show that there is a diversity of approaches across English LPAs in terms of GB positive planning for nature. We argue that whilst some LPAs are ambitious in their approach, GB is still underutilised as a policy to promote integrated agendas such as green infrastructure, climate change, health and social equality, contributing to disintegration in the urban and rural. International examples of comparative policies provide best practice policy examples for promoting the beneficial use of GB through joined up agendas.
Peri-urban landscapes amidst flows of water and coal: exploring the challenges of climate change adaptation in the Cesar River Watershed

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Abstract

The presentation draws upon research in the Cesar River Watershed (Colombia), an area that is facing the challenges of transitioning towards a post-mining economy, protecting the largest Ramsar site in Colombia, and addressing local socio-economic issues. The soils of this watershed contain coal reserves that have been exploited since the 1980s, providing an important source of income and employment for the region. Nevertheless, despite being connected to the global market and receiving large royalties from the coal exploitation, the region suffers from infrastructure backwardness and poverty persists, especially in the rural areas. The Zapatosa marsh was declared a Ramsar site in 2018, its water dynamics are closely tied to the seasonal changes of the Magdalena River floodplain, it is a biodiversity hotspot and works as a buffer for floods. Nevertheless, the wetland is being threatened by fish overexploitation, soil erosion, pollution and the advancement of cattle ranching. Despite the urgent global needs to stop carbon emissions and to halt the loss of wetlands, research about the local and global dynamics and socio-cultural dimensions of this landscape remains fragmented. Therefore, this research aims to develop a multi-dimensional description of the peri-urban landscapes of the Cesar River Watershed. We will present this description through a series of cartographies that explore the historical transformation and current conditions of water and soil and its relationship to local inhabitants at different scales. These cartographies allow us to investigate the barriers and opportunities to implement spatial interventions for climate change adaptation that embrace the socio-cultural realities and identities of the local population.
New rurality and sustainability of agriculture in Japanese urban fringes: a case study of Kodaira City, Tokyo Metropolis

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Abstract

With rapid globalisation and urbanisation, agriculture in the urban fringes is experiencing several changes; for instance, in the preferences of consumers who require more food security. In many metropolitan areas worldwide, agriculture also seems to be positioned for a multifunctional industry. In the urban fringes of Tokyo, these productive activities also create and commodify a new rurality, which former agriculture in urban fringes possess. Therefore, this study aimed to capture this new rurality and explore how it is created and consumed in diversification of urban residents’ preference using the case study of Kodaira City, which is an agricultural area in the urban fringes of Tokyo. Public survey data were analysed to illustrate the spatial distribution of agricultural management patterns and classify them accordingly. Furthermore, farmers’ decision-making regarding adopting specific methods of agricultural management and interaction with urban residents from field research and interviews was revealed. The results showed that classified interactions between farmers and urban residents based on agricultural management and the features of the area in Kodaira City are evident in a definite pattern. The results also revealed that farming managements have diversified and brewed a new rurality because of farmers’ management strategies as businessmen. These farmers are responsible for the change in consumers’ outlook toward agriculture and its products. Conversely, urban residents, both consciously and unconsciously, consume a new rurality created in such a productive process. In Kodaira City, the relation between farmers and urban residents through exchange of a new rurality makes urban agriculture more sustainable.
Ecosystem-based management for beaches along the Mexican Pacific coast: Marismas Nacionales

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Abstract

The intense use of many of our coasts has focused the management of these systems on short-term human needs and services, such as fisheries, tourism and urban development. This often brings about degradation of the ecosystems, and the alteration of related physical and biological processes, rendering the coast highly dysfunctional. The situation is worsened by climate-change related risks (such as increasing storminess and sea-level rise) and accelerated human encroachment of the coasts. This scenario calls for urgent actions worldwide that emphasise the need for sustainable strategies and supports the principle of an ecosystem approach to management. The goal must be to enable sustainable use of the goods and services Nature has provided, while maintaining the integrity and functionality of coastal ecosystems. This study focuses on the Marismas Nacionales Biosphere Reserve (MANAS), on Mexico’s Pacific coast, a highly biodiverse system, made up of coastal dunes and mangroves. An ecosystem-based approach to managing the MANAS coastal zone should include the following: a) hydrosedimentary dynamics; b) pressure analyses, including fisheries and human settlements; and c) the biological diversity of the beaches, which we explore in this paper from a geographic perspective. From the findings we propose an Ecosystem-Based Management of the MANAS coastal zone, supported by three pillars: the physical component, human needs and impacts, and biodiversity.
The displacement of the rural in the rural-urban fringe? Evaluating stakeholder imaginaries of fringe spaces in the in-between spaces of city-regionalism

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Abstract

The rural-urban fringe (RUF) - as an example of a peri-urban landscape - represents a hybrid, relational space; one possessing unique functions, processes and forms (Gallent, 2006), but equally one characterised by the rural and urban spaces that surround it (Woods, 2011). Recent research on the RUF has also promoted relational thinking, particularly in relation to how such spaces are governed (Scott, 2019). Through drawing on the example of Warrington, UK - located in an 'in-between' space of city-regionalism - the paper examines how territorial approaches to governing the RUF can be influenced by broader city-regional governance contexts. We outline how key actors responsible for Warrington’s RUF are attempting to draw economic potential from surrounding urban ‘engines of growth’ (Lee, 2009), shaping new ‘RUF imaginaries’ in specific and deliberate ways. However, we also outline an important implication, in that the relational, urban-centric lens adopted by such actors is leading to an increasing ‘displacement of the rural’ in their RUF imaginaries, and which may, in turn, have implications for the crafting and delivery of suitable objects of governance for the ‘metropolitan countryside’.
Abstract

This contribution draws on a recent publication titled *Une Caraïbe décoloniale. Ressusciter les ancêtres à travers la langue* (Editions Universitaires Européennes, 2022). As a Co-editor with retired Linguist Dr Morgan Dalphinis, I will first give a general perspective of this collective work organised in two parts and nine chapters. At the intersection of language, politics of memory and heritage tourism, the chapters demonstrate that Creole heritage discussion in terms of education policy and grass-roots engagement can be an exciting field of academic study, as well as a vibrant field of policy study for practitioners. Secondly, using two texts of the well-known Haitian poet Georges Castera whose passing in 2020 coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the International Organization of Francophonie (OIF) of which Haiti is a founding member, I will look back at the academic relevance of Haitian memory vis-à-vis this geopolitical body and how the dynamics of power and political posture manifest themselves through linguistic practices between institutions and actors.
Peri-urban dairying in the 21st century: empowered women and seaweed vs methane cow burps

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Abstract

P.J. Atkins observes that one-third of world farming is generally in periurban areas. Today, trends vary between post-industrial and emerging economies. Republican US presidents encouraged capitalist consolidation, as dairy farms plunged from 3.5m in 1950, to 58k in 2012, to 29k today. Remaining farms and processors left metropoles for unpopulated areas with water (Scholten (2007, 2014). Bucking intensification were small grazers in Organic Valley cooperative, founded 1988. Periurban counter trends in Seattle (and Newcastle UK) included alternative food networks of women and other small farmers selling local, organic food and dairy products. Emerging economy trends differ. India’s White Revolution (Scholten 1997, 2010; World Bank 1998) showed the post-colonial cooperative AMUL.com model was an effective development tool for health, education, and income for marginal women, children in farm families. Thus, Amul influences the East Africa Dairy Development project, helping meet demand in burgeoning territorial metropoles of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Periurban EADD villages serve Nairobi consumption while supplying Neslé (Scholten 2013). Can dairying be sustained into the 22nd century? The elephant, or milchcow, in the room is climate apocalypse: the 15% of anthropogenic greenhouse gases – especially methane – emitted by ruminants is pushing temperatures 1.5C over pre-industrial levels (IPCC 2022). Fortunately, scientists say seaweed curbs cow burps. In the spirit of ‘Empowering Rural Women’ (FAO 2018) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, women on all continents need investment and training to engage in growth, distribution and application of seaweed in cattle feed to better themselves - and the planet.
A new narrative for the Milanese peri-urban areas

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Abstract

Often, the peri-urban has been narrated from the travellers’ picturesque perspective that starts and ends in the city. A practice rooted in the rise of modern lifestyles which the Impressionists excelled at depicting the relationship between landscape and leisure (Donadieu 2006). The countryside near cities has been defined as a space of its own to attempt at breaking the urban-rural dichotomy (Fanfani 2015, Mininni 2017). However, just like narratives and paintings, projects, policies, and research have often approached these territories from an urban-centred perspective. This narrative got intensified by urban dwellers as a post-pandemic practice that attempts to rediscover in the nearby countryside, not only new dimensions of proximity but also of distancing and freedom. This paper proposes an alternative narrative based on differences and coexistence (di Campli and Gabbianelli 2022) constructed through interviews, cartographic, and data analysis of four types of elements found in the Milanese peri-urban territories that have matured in the last two decades as alternative ways of agricultural production, distribution, and cooperation, as forms of resistance and adaptation in a highly land-contested territory of an aspiring rural metropolis: 1) productive rural districts, 2) ethical purchasing groups (gruppi di acquisto solidale) 3) multifunctional farms, 4) social agriculture programs. Due to the current geopolitical crisis, topics such as proximity agriculture, food security, and supply chains are back in the political discussion, therefore production in peri-urban areas. This work is part of a Ph.D. project at Politecnico di Milano on new forms of inhabiting, citizenship, and production in the distinctiveness of peri-urban areas.
Disrupting capitalist countrysides: (un)making rural pasts, presents and futures in Community Supported Agriculture initiatives in Germany

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Abstract

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) initiatives are often rural-urban hybrids. Linking urban consumers to food producers located in the near and distant peripheries of cities, CSAs have been found to have positive effects across the rural-urban spectrum - from the re-connection of consumers to the origin of their food, the re-enchantment of food production to the preservation of peasant agriculture. In this paper, we examine the ways in which CSA initiatives are shaped by and in return transform the rural-urban geographies within which they are performed. We contribute to recent efforts to analyse CSA as a prefiguration of post-capitalist economies by exploring how CSA initiatives may disrupt the capitalist urbanisation of the countryside by (un)making rural and periurban places. Our approach builds on Feola’s (2019) concept of ‘unmaking’ in combination with Ginn’s (2017) work on the materialisation of the past in sub-urban gardens, which raises questions about the roles the past may play in the CSA initiatives’ (un)making of rurality, and their making of emancipatory rural and periurban futures. We draw on interviews and participant observation in two CSA initiatives in Germany: one located in the metropolitan countryside of an East German city, the other comparatively far from metropolitan reach in the South-West German countryside. In line with Robinson’s (2016) call for “thinking cities through elsewhere”, we think metropolitan countrysides both in and of themselves and through their supposedly non-metropolitan counterparts. We contribute to debates on contested countrysides and periurban landscapes by proposing rural-urban alternative agricultural initiatives as important actors in rural emancipation, suggesting that both internal rural dynamics and metropolitan entanglements play a role in the making of post-capitalist (metropolitan) countrysides, as do (un)surprising presences and absences of the rural past.
Emergent territorialities of a post-carbon planetary order

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Abstract

The transition to a 100% carbon free future requires the deployment of a massive network of renewable energy (RE) infrastructures at a planetary scale. Unlike the geographically constrained sources as oil or gas, RE production can happen theoretically everywhere, yet there are socio-geographic patterns and privileged locations with peripherality, both geographic, socio-economic and political, as their common denominator. Mountain tops, small islands, sea surface, are mobilized for the electrification of urban life, even far beyond their respective national jurisdictions: at a cost to local ecosystems they are transformed to places quite central to planetary urbanization processes of. New kinds of dispersed and liquid territorialities are emerging, connecting places of concentrated and extended urbanization, as urban network formations of energy production. These formation involve actors and parameterers of quite different nature; from rhizomatic networks of grassroots local communities that resist mass industrial RE projects shaping their own alternatives to decarbonization, to new legislative schemes such as European Union’s 2021 Climate Law that transcends state’s territoriality.

This is an attempt to combine aspects of the spatiality of RE with critical urban theory of planetary urbanization, to make a theoretical speculation on possible urban planetary futures, especially ones of just transition. The scale and speed of the transition, the much bigger land footprint of RE infrastructures, their different operational, production and distribution logics, set the basis for a political and spatial transformation of the whole planet. In the emergency of the transition and as RE networks are rapidly formed it is critical to try to diagnose the different political visions that certain geographies and design of RE imply; to distinguish the geopolitical implications of centralized versus decentralized energy sharing, city-centric design and governance versus interventions and participation across all the spectrum of urbanization processes, planetary thinking versus global as state-based spatial politics.
Experiences of Recovery, Resistance, and Well-being in the aftermath of the August 4, 2020 Beirut Blast. The case of Khaddit Beirut

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Abstract

This paper explores experiences of recovery, resistance and well-being in the aftermath of the August 4, 2020 Beirut port explosion. The triple burden of economic collapse, the COVID-19 pandemic and then the explosion overlaid with a legacy of violence, sectarianism and corruption presented an unprecedented multi-layered crisis in people’s lives.

With over 220 dead, 6000 wounded, and 300,000 displaced, the blast shattered the lives of thousands and brought to bear the endemic corruption, violence and injustices of the status quo. Yet, the blast also mobilized many. Seeing affect as a ‘source and site of resistance’ (Di Gregorio and Merolli 2016), we investigate the modes, geographies and temporalities of recovery, resistance and well-being the traumatic experience of the blast mobilized.

We focus on the efforts of a group of local activist-scholars establishing Khaddit Beirut (Beirut Shake-up) as an alternative ‘grassroots initiative (...) developing a community-led, evidence-based, and locally-driven roadmap for recovery’.

The stark concentration of interconnected and endemic crises and the role of local activist-scholars affectively mobilized in an alternative emancipatory model for recovery form a unique case for studying the way in which people experience, navigate, resist and attempt to transform disasters.

For exploring the role that affect plays in modes, geographies and temporalities of recovery, resistance and well-being, we ask:

What impact has the blast had on the lives and well-being of Khaddit Beirut members? How did it intersect with existing layers of endemic corruption, violence and injustice? What affects and imaginaries influenced their co-mobilization and mode of resistance? In efforts to ‘break the cycles of corruption, sectarianism and dependency’, to what extent has their model been successful? What challenges have they faced? Almost 3 years since the blast and start of recovery efforts, what lessons, reflections, and imaginaries on recovery are they left with?
A Lavatory Geopolitics: An absurdist account of the Trump Office

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Abstract

Disrupting the divide between fictional writing and supposedly truthful accounts of geopolitical practice, this paper takes on an absurdist account of American geopolitics by narrating events, reflections and situations taking place in the bathrooms and lavatories of the White House. Until the Trump Presidency, these historically unexplored places were left ignored in ‘academic’ ‘literature’ and ‘serious’ presses. This changed with the arrival of the Trump Administration, which, I argue, marks a paradigm shift in the importance of lavatory geopolitics. Expressing his concerns of the use of toilets and bathrooms in the White House, Trump (in NBC 2019) identified a “situation where we’re looking very strongly at sinks and showers, and other elements of bathrooms”. The former U.S. President himself used the toilet as a regular place to hold office. Whilst on the loo, he fired the Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, and, flushed so many papers down the pipes that engineers regularly had to unclog the system (Haberman 2022, forthcoming).

Conventional accounts of the conduct of geopolitics situate and border the practice in securitised and specially engineered designed rooms to which only a small number of mostly men have access. Such rooms, including executive offices, command centres and war rooms, mark a specific sober atmosphere and evoke an affective geography felt as weighty, calculated, proficient, and procedural, which provide and instil a sense of legitimacy and authority to seats of governance. Using conventional language appears not only unfitting to describe the specificity of Trumpian toilet geopolitics, but it may also be unfeasible and unworkable given the historically constructed privacy surrounding such places. This paper uses absurdist narrativisation of lavatory events to overcome the limits of conventional discourse in analysing a feculent politics.

Bibliography


From ‘nature has carbon’ to ‘nature as carbon’: Carbon measurement and the shifting environmental subjectivities of Net Zero

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Abstract

Ecosystem restoration is widely heralded as the most ecologically sensitive and socially just means for capturing carbon, by simultaneously restoring nature and providing ‘nature-based’ revenue streams for often-marginalised rural communities. To facilitate the expansion of natural capital markets, digital tools and technologies, such as drones, satellite imaging and terrestrial laser scanning, are being developed to improve the measurement of carbon stored in forests, peatlands and grasslands. These technologies are presented as necessary for creating objective knowledge about ecosystem restoration. This presentation critically interrogates how these technologies are being developed in the Scottish Highlands, based on 6-months of ethnographic research with conservationists, carbon specialists and entrepreneurs. I argue that in the Scottish Highlands, improved carbon measurement accuracy comes at a heavy cost, whilst doing little to further ecosystem restoration or facilitate a ‘green recovery’. Firstly, social inequalities are entrenched as access to carbon measurement technologies is reserved for organisations with the capital to afford them. Secondly, improved carbon measurement accuracy facilitates the expansion of market environmentalism, as increasingly more parts of an ecosystem can be translated into value-able entities. Based on these findings, I contend that carbon measurement technologies are enabling a transition in environmental subjectivity, from “nature has carbon” to “nature as carbon”. Ecosystems become reducible to their measurable carbon stocks, allowing ecosystems to become manipulated to maximise their carbon value at the expense of other human and nonhuman interests. I conclude with a positive speculation, considering how shifting access to these technologies could enable a more equitable ‘green recovery’.
How Does Your Garden Grow? Women, Allotment Gardening & Well-Being.

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Abstract

Garden-based activities have been recognised as having a range of therapeutic benefit (Scartazza et al, 2020; Genter et al, 2015; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Arguably, the emphasis of such positive impacts have been more readily acknowledged since the SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19) health pandemic, where access to green spaces and open areas have proven to be more important than ever (Corley et al, 2020).

Green spaces are, however, gendered spaces, and women’s experiences in these spheres are often under-explored, mirroring existing societal gender biases (Massey, 1994). It is therefore not surprising that academia has overlooked an in-depth exploration of women and gardening (Reyes-Garcia, 2010).

This paper will discuss initial PhD findings from research which, using visual research and ethnographic methods, explores gender and allotment spaces with a group of women gardeners. Such research is critical because for too long the experiences of women have been devalued from the horticultural narrative. If we can begin to identify and explore the benefits and the differences, as well as the “why” and the “how” of women and their experiences in shared green spaces, we can expand our understanding of gender, community & wellbeing within this field of study. More importantly, it can aid to empower these green-fingered women, demonstrating why more green space should be devoted to them, and consequently influence social policy. Importantly, gardens and gardening can then begin to be seen and understood not just as men’s work, but as a woman’s space too.
Beyond the ‘usual suspects’? Climate equity in practice: Engaging diverse communities in co-producing an arboretum-meadow.

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Abstract

Nature-based solutions (NBS) can mitigate the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and mental wellbeing. The advantages of co-producing NBS with local communities have been explored, yet there is a lack of understanding of the priorities and values of diverse local stakeholder groups and their perceptions of the opportunities and challenges of co-production.

We addressed this gap by conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with eight stakeholders in contrasting roles involved in the co-production of an educational arboretum-meadow on a redundant mini-golf site in Wardown Park, within the High Town ward of Luton, Bedfordshire, UK. Here there is considerable ethnic diversity with 41% residents White British, and 59% other ethnicities. There are significant BAME communities and 30.8% women are economically inactive.

We found diverse priorities related to participants’ stakeholder role and values. All stakeholders prioritised connecting children to nature. Wider community engagement, professional advocacy and placemaking under austerity were prioritised by most partners, with fewer prioritising climate change resilience and biodiversity enhancement. Most participants perceived diverse partner expertise as an opportunity of co-production. COVID was viewed as a significant challenge by those closely involved on the ground, whereas partners involved more peripherally saw it as an opportunity. We demonstrate that learning from this project has fed into local policy and practice and that it has potential to make a wider international impact. Our research provides insight into the potential for co-production of NBS in a relatively deprived, ethnically diverse context to contribute to “futureproofing” towns and cities by fostering nature connection amongst children.
Production of Fit City: Physical (in)Activity, Gendered Body and Everyday Spaces in Delhi, India

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Abstract

The paper explores the emergence of fitness practices in Delhi in the context of recently installed Open Gyms in its public parks. By doing so, it intends to map the emerging critical geography of physical activity (Coen, Davidson and Rosenberg 2019), everyday spaces, and the body (Longhurst 2001) in Delhi by employing Fit City as a heuristic device (Herrick 2009). These Open Gyms are aimed at increasing the physical activity among the ‘population’ in order to make them healthy, fit, and productive. In this context, the present ethnographic case study is set against a dual backdrop. First, the policy modes of thinking through which physical (in)activity has emerged as a ‘legitimate policy issue’ in the recent past with significant implications (Piggin, 2019), while critical scrutiny of its mobilisation at the global, national and local level remains limited. The second is the embeddedness of physical (in)activity at an individual level where it amounts to the concerns of social and spatial justice, expression of identity, liberty, and, surveillance which have received negligible attention in urban studies. This paper brings these two views in juxtaposition to each other by examining the case of Open Gyms in Delhi through the lens of governmentality (Foucault, 1991) by proposing three logics to the Open Gym. It argues that the production of a fit city is rooted in the conceptions of a fit, productive, healthy, and disciplined body that is reproduced through initiatives such as open gyms.

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Abstract

The study of import tariffs pass-through has been observed to be crucial for policy making, for instance, this may inflate some goods’ prices thus harming individual welfare. However, the extant literature on the import tariffs pass-through effect has largely ignored the possibility of spatial dependence between domestic goods prices which may brew imprecise estimates. Hence, this study proposes an extension of the traditional empirical model for estimating the import tariff pass-through effect by introducing controls for the domestic spatial dependence of prices. The estimates rely on a panel dataset of consumer goods for Zimbabwe, which has both the individual and time spatial effects. The spatial econometrics model used in this study all agree that there is positive spatial dependence of domestic goods’ prices in Zimbabwe over the period 2009 to 2014. When compared to our modified model, the traditional import tariffs pass-through model was found to highly overestimate the import tariffs pass-through effect. The study found that a positive and significant portion of import tariffs is being passed on to domestic goods prices in Zimbabwe. Thus, there is a need for policy to be cautious of the import tariffs increase in relationship to national inflation, and poverty targets.
How supply chain fragility has exposed modernisation’s limits in Myanmar

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Abstract

Fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of global production networks, as supply chain disruptions have impacted industrial arrangements around the world. In Myanmar, an initial shortage of supplies from China led to factory closures and a loss of 10,000 to 15,000 jobs in February 2020. By September 2020, 223 factories had filed for closure, temporary closure, or redundancy following a government-mandated lockdown. With no effective social safety net in the country, dismissed factory workers and their families were struggling. Added to this, military and police violence, and economic disruption following the February 2021 military coup in Myanmar prompted further factory closures, workforce reductions, and the withdrawal of many international brands that had been sourcing their products from Myanmar’s garment, footwear, and accessories industries. By December 2021, 1.6 million jobs had been lost in Myanmar due to the fallout of the coup, according to the ILO. Against this historical backdrop, I assess in this paper the promise of foreign-investment-driven capitalist modernisation that framed Myanmar’s so-called transition—the ten-year period preceding the 2021 coup.
Circulation of labour and flows of used fibre: Filipino migrant workers and the used clothing economy in Sharjah (UAE)

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Abstract

The Philippines have long been the world’s leading labour-exporting country and over 2 million Filipino migrant workers currently reside in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Filipino migrants engage in diverse occupations, but are particularly prominent in the global shipping industry - and thus in the labour on cargo ships in the UAE’s container port Jebel Ali - and in household and care work in the Emirates. This paper examines articulations between this global circulation of Filipino migrant workers and material flows of used fibre materials to the UAE. Used clothing donations, originating mainly in OECD countries, as well as unprecedented amounts of unsold, leftover clothing, provide the material basis for the rapidly growing global second-hand economy.

Filipino migrant workers play a central role in the second-hand clothing trade in Sharjah. First, male migrant workers with linkages to the shipping industry have entered the wholesale and retail business, opening so-called “Ukay Ukay” (Tagalog for “rummaging/digging”) shops that re-export sorted clothing bales to Africa, Asia and across the Middle East. Second, female care workers engage in more invisible practices of second-hand clothes trading: from the small-scale resale of used cuddly toys supplied from vending machines to the shared organisation of container transport, Filipina workers enable second-hand garment circulations within the Emirates and to the Philippines. In examining the role of Filipino migrant workers in the used garment economy in Sharjah, this paper contributes to debates on labour and global production networks in times of crisis in several ways: first, by focusing on an economy that features no production process in the classical sense, this paper draws attention to valuation processes that tend to be overlooked in classical production network analysis. Second, and relatedly, the practices of work this paper elucidates lie beyond the dominant labour regimes - here shipping and care work - in which Filipino workers and working lives are conventionally analysed. Finally, this analysis of intersecting flows of labour and goods is not only situated in Sharjah, it also explores how the second-hand clothing circulations Filipino migrant workers enable co-produce socio-spatial relations and thus transform the city.
Labour risk in global production networks: Response strategies of cruise ship labour in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

The collapse of the global industry as a result of the COVID-19 crisis has disclosed how precarious the livelihoods of workers embedded in globalized industries are. In the GPN literature, moments of crisis have recently been addressed in the debate on ‘GPN risk’. While this debate has contributed to our understanding of firms’ risk mitigation strategies, little attention has been paid to workers’ response strategies in the face of crises.

To fill this gap, this paper contributes to the literature on ‘GPN risk’ by ‘flipping the coin’ and discussing the notion of ‘labour risk’ from a workers’ perspective. In this context, the paper sheds light on the response strategies of cruise ship workers from Indonesia during the COVID-19 crisis. Drawing on interviews with workers and experts, we analyse to which extent workers uses and developed coping, adaptive, and transformative capacities to sustain their livelihoods amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, we discuss what impact workers’ response strategies have on the labour regime in the cruise industry that heavily relies on an ‘on-demand’ labour pool.

Our study shows that workers ‘at the bottom of GPN’ are not passive victims of economic crises, but sentient social beings who construct their own spaces for resilience and thereby add distinct layers to the GPN that are structured not by capitalist relations but by relations of solidarity and reciprocity. However, in particular workers’ resilience practices also contribute to the reproduction of exploitative capital accumulation regimes underpinning GPNs that are based on the outsourcing of economic risk to workers.
Resistances of Love.

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Abstract

What do we love when love? This is the question posed by Juliet. Romeo and Juliet, scene 2 Act 2, the balcony scene; Juliet conducts an analysis of love, of what love loves, and what love demands. Neither Romeo nor Juliet can escape their fate. It is written in the stars. Inexorably, the play unfolds its cruelty towards Friday morn, when civil peace will be restored via the sublimation of their death and the elevation of their names. How does, if it does, love resist? This paper will attempt to follow Juliet in her analysis. To follow her into the night of love. To follow her, as far as I can, across the intersection of the trauma of love and the trauma of ancient violence, as each engenders the other. Such that their, and perhaps our, only chance, if it is one, is separation, delay, deferment, of avoiding a rendezvous with their names (see Derrida 2008 p.141). Juliet knows this, she understands the law of disidentification, the resistances of love, and that the name of the loved will never arrive on time or at the right destination.
Does urban greening benefit everyone? Social inclusion and exclusion of the use of urban green space in a West Midlands city.

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Abstract

Urban green spaces – e.g., parks, gardens, orchards and nature reserves - can provide a range of health benefits to city residents. These health benefits are considered crucial in times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw different individuals, groups and whole communities increase their use, and enjoyment of, urban green spaces as a way of escaping the confines of their homes during lockdown. However, while the use of urban green space does have health benefits, they are also sites of control and regulation. Urban green spaces as sites of encounter can facilitate exclusionary practices based on place affinities and identities of those city residents who see themselves as guardians of such spaces. This can regulate the actions and routine activities that specific individuals perform in urban green spaces, often constructing such use as ‘inappropriate’ and resulting in a range of intersectional exclusions along the lines of ‘race’, class, gender, and age. Drawing on focus groups with community groups of a suburban area in a West Midlands city, this paper aims to examine how local urban green spaces are used, mobilised and consumed to the exclusion of certain groups who are seen as not using urban green spaces appropriately. The paper concludes that urban green spaces are not always synonymous with being beneficial (e.g., promoting health and well-being), but can be used as a spatialised expression of power and place-identity by some residents which gives rise to an inclusion and exclusion dynamic that creates tensions and divisions within urban communities.

Which session is this paper for? Session 80
Basic income: ameliorating capitalism or underwriting radical change?

Mary Lawhon\textsuperscript{1}, Tyler McCreary\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}University of Edinburgh, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Florida State University, USA

Abstract

Cash transfers have moved from relative obscurity to mainstream political practice. From global south developmental policy to pandemic payments, there is growing concern with relying on employment for income. Many on the left have been sceptical of if not antagonistic to such transfers, instead urging either direct state provisioning or economic transformation beyond the state. Here, we develop a third position, rooted in cautious optimism about the open-ended implications of cash transfers. We urge further attention to the possibility that the provisioning of a durable, redistributive universal basic income might enable escape from unjust economic relations, underwrite alternative economies and free time for making democracy. We frame this not as an assured outcome but as a possibility, one those concerned with radical politics might contribute to creating.
Inhabiting Popular Economies: Work, Housing and Urban Life in Amazonia

Rodrigo Castriota
Politecnico di Torino, Italy

Abstract

In this short intervention I will introduce my role in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project, and in the Beyond Inhabitation Lab. In particular, I will focus on my work in metropolitan Amazonia exploring the intersections between work and inhabitation. I am interested in the role that inhabitation plays in how Amazonian urban majorities are able to secure specific livelihoods; in what are the materialities that both compose spaces of work/inhabitation and result from everyday practices of dwelling and work/exchange; and in what are the extended forms of movement and circulation that enable these practices to exist in the ways they do. These dimensions are analyzed under the broader rubric of popular economies – the practices and circuits through which popular sectors render their life necessities viable, including different forms of work, exchange, reproduction and circulation.
Thinking Recovery as a Practice of Crafting ‘Alter Childhoods’ with Children’s Urban Forest Relations and Movements

Nicole Land\textsuperscript{1}, Narda Nelson\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}Ryerson University, Canada. \textsuperscript{2}Western University, Canada

Abstract

This paper asks: what are the temporalities (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Kummen, 2016) and politics of recovery in Canadian early childhoods? How might we mobilize the differentiated, material contours of recover(ies) with young children in the shadow of uneven climate crisis realities (Cairns, 2021)? Working with data from multi-year action research projects drawing on pedagogical inquiry methods, we share narratives of thinking with children and early childhood educators about how we might respond, toward living well with others, in our common worlds (Taylor, 2017). Taking up Kraftl’s (2015) ‘alter childhoods’ as method for attending to the biopolitical liveliness of our deep implication within worlds ripe with ecologies and viral others, we think beyond educational preoccupations with children’s voices and human agency (Kraftl, 2013) asking “recovery from what and for whom?” Here, we refuse universalizing tenants of mainstream early childhood framings to consider biopolitical ‘breaks’ (Phelan & Hansen, 2021) enacted by the COVID-19 pandemic as an uneasy conduit for unsettling the dominance of settler colonial futurities (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). No longer quotidian to take healthy, bounded, developmentally-appropriate, and individualized subjects as benchmarks of innocent childhood, this paper rejects nostalgic yearnings for a time that never was (Brand, 2020), interrogating fissures in the spatialities and temporalities of sedimented understandings of normalcy that create conditions for white supremacy and anthropocentric ecological devastation. In our first example, we ask how alter childhoods might respond to and with urban forest park pedagogies as they put future-making to work beyond settler futurities (Nxumalo & Cedillo, 2017). Then, we contest discourses of ‘returning’ children to nature, as a curative backdrop for promoting motor skill development, physical activity, and building better ‘future stewards’ as they leave their homes post-COVID. Together, this paper brings children’s urban forest relations and movement forward as biopolitical spaces of recovery-as-regulation - and invention.
Workplace futures and the valuation of flexibility

Lizzie Richardson
Goethe University, Germany

Abstract

This paper considers the “future of work” through an interest in how working practices and conditions in the UK increasingly involve different mechanisms that enrol the future in the workplace. It focuses on one specific mechanism: valuation. The pandemic has starkly demonstrated how the spatial flexibility of work enabled by digital technologies occurs through interrelated forms of both fixity and movement that frequently produce distributed workplace arrangements. Such spatial flexibility has implications for conceptualising the agencies involved in work’s occurrence. Whilst formal work in the UK has conventionally been approached through analysis of the employment contract together with the sometimes antagonistic agencies of the employer and employee, spatial flexibility requires that other forces - previously “external” - are now examined as part of workplace activities. Valuation processes beyond that of the value of labour itself (and its product) appear to be playing an increasing role in workplaces. The flexibility of working arrangements and of working space – whether this be office space or logistical arrangements for urban delivery – is subject to processes of more or less speculative valuation that are shaping the geographies of work. Such valuation of flexibility tends to appraise the future value of a specific work(place) arrangement (such as office flexibility) in order to decide the present value. These workspace valuation processes, some of which involve the creation of assets, are not of incidental concern to scholars of labour but rather are central to understanding how the social and economic role of work in the UK is changing.
Building back better for all: working with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to deliver race equality

Nigel de Noronha
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

This paper explores the experience of working with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to develop their race equality strategy. GMCA have invested in intelligence to support their programme to build back better for all. They commissioned an independent Inequalities Commission chaired by Professor Kate Pickett which recommended the establishment of a Race Equality Panel; a study of health inequalities by Michael Marmot that produced a city region report and committed analyst time to develop measures. The complexity of operating at neighbourhood, local authority and city region scales required investment in building productive partnership models.

The presentation will reflect on the challenges of working within national policy frameworks that fail to recognise structural and institutional racism, negotiating a common language and operating within the constraints of what individual agencies believe are within their powers and duties. It will cover. The substantive work focussed on the experiences of racialised minorities in education, employment, health and well-being, and criminal justice. In education it highlights the commitment and professionalism of teachers and the benefits of collaboration, in employment the challenge of defining good jobs and in health the lack of good quality information and the impact of income, debt and precarity on well-being. In criminal justice it highlights the failures of the local police force to protect racialised minorities and the use of collective punishments based on essentialised racial categories.
Interrogating the spatio-temporal evolution of energy poverty in China at households’ level based on five provinces

Lin Zhang
University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

Energy poverty is a significant issue in many countries which is socially and spatially concentrated. Building an understanding of energy poverty in China is crucial to find ways of delivering the goal of clean energy development and poverty alleviation in the Chinese Fourteenth Five-Year Plan. This paper seeks to investigate energy poverty in China at household level in Gansu, Liaoning, Guangdong, Henan and Shanghai provinces covering both urban and rural areas from 2010 to 2018 by using the family economic surveys. Firstly, the classic 10% and LIHC indicators were used to estimate the spatio-temporal changes of energy poverty in these five provinces. Then, the multiple regression methodology and GIS were applied based on overviewing previous studies to explore the relationships between the vulnerabilities and the energy poverty indicators on socio-demographical perspective. Results show that energy poverty is severe for the lowest 20% income group in northern provinces like Gansu and Liaoning in contrast to Henan and Shanghai in the South where households are less severely affected. Rural areas show higher energy poverty rates than urban areas under both 10% and LIHC indicators, but this gap is decreasing over the time period. Thus, policies should focus on heterogeneity by considering the needs of different provinces and urban/rural areas when implementing energy efficiency measures, and targeting more on the energy poor in poverty alleviation. We also suggest paying particular attention to targeting households with low income by supporting practices such as subsidies and guidance for energy consumption and appliance purchasing.
Mapping the ‘poverty premium’: using spatial microsimulation to estimate the extra costs paid by low-income households in different areas of the UK when accessing essential services

Jamie Evans, Sara Davies
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

The ‘poverty premium’ describes the way in which the ‘poor pay more’ to access a range of goods and services. The term, first coined in 1960s USA (Caplovitz, 1963), can apply to a wide range of everyday expenses – including food, clothing and transport - but over the past 15 years in the UK there has been a resurgence of interest in measuring the cost of the poverty premium when accessing essential services, such as energy, insurance and financial products. Davies et al’s (2016) mixed methods study calculated that the average cost of these poverty premiums to low-income households in the UK was £490 per year. In light of renewed interest from policy-makers in geographical inequalities and ‘levelling-up’ the country, we build on the work of Davies et al to map the extent to which different components of the poverty premium affect different areas and to estimate the total cost of the poverty premium to households in UK parliamentary constituencies. We do so through spatial microsimulation, which brings together data from Davies et al’s 2016 survey and aggregate 2011 census data for LSOAs, to produce small area estimates of the impact of different poverty premiums, based on an area’s socio-demographic profile. We validate our estimates for one type of premium – prepayment electricity meter usage – by comparing the results with real-world prepayment meter data published by BEIS (2017). The resulting maps represent an important tool for both campaigners and policy-makers, highlighting that if the ‘poor pay more’, poor areas also pay more.
Left Behind and Left Out: Seeing (Dis)connections in the Spatially Focused Migration Network of England and Wales

Rachael Sanderson, Rachel Franklin, Danny MacKinnon, Joe Matthews
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

‘Left behind’ places have been associated with growing populism in British society, as rebellious voting is linked to places abandoned to long term stagnation or decline (Ford & Goodwin, 2014; Rodríguez-Pose, 2018). This draws similarities to the process of peripheralization, where places are divided into interdependent groups of core and periphery, with the core growing as resources and actors flow from the periphery (Leibert & Golinski, 2016). This presentation will offer a unique understanding of these geographies through the lens of migration, specifically the links between places that shape the experience of being left behind in the UK through depopulation and repopulation. By analysing spatial focusing, the project reflects on how dispersed or focused the origins or destinations are for a place within a migration network. The understanding of these flows is important, as overly-focused flows result in the uneven allocation of population and resources, impacting on regional development (Liu et al., 2015). Previous studies used the Gini Index to assess the level of spatial focusing within a migration network (Plane & Mulligan, 1997). This analysis will apply this approach, calculating the Gini indices of total migration flows and individually for 331 Local Authorities within the UK using detailed estimates of migration flows, before extending the methodology to analyse how this varies across different age groups. Overall, it seeks to identify links between spatial focusing and left behind places, to investigate potential causes of inequality.
Evidence of structural, functional and spatial inequalities in the post-pandemic recovery of British retail centres

Patrick Ballantyne, Alex Singleton, Les Dolega
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected consumer behaviour, placing significant pressure on retail centres. These consumption spaces have struggled for many years prior to the pandemic (Stephenson, 2020; High Streets Task Force, 2021), however, there is significant evidence that the onset of the pandemic has accelerated these trends, often being likened to a ‘pandemic retail apocalypse’ (Frago, 2021) or ‘catalyst for change’ (RTPI, 2020). Whilst recent studies have identified declining footfall/activity in specific consumption spaces and cities (Enoch et al., 2021; Millington et al., 2020), they have not addressed how these trends relate to structural/functional differences between retail centres, and the resulting spatial inequalities created. In this paper, we utilise a high-resolution mobility dataset, provided by Geolytix, to examine changes to ‘activity’ in British retail centres, as we emerge out of the COVID-19 pandemic. First, we provide evidence of structural and functional inequalities, quantifying the extent to which retail centres with differing functions have ‘rebounded’ unevenly (e.g. small local centres vs large city centres). Secondly, we identify significant spatial inequalities in the post-pandemic recovery of retail centres at the regional level, through consideration of changes to the distribution of ‘activity’ between retail centres in a series of local authorities. This piece is novel, providing a new Consumer Data Research Centre (CDRC) tool, to better understand localised pandemic impacts on retail centres, with significant implications for the use of new data sources to understand, visualise and explain disparities in the response of British retail centres to the pandemic.
A geography of differential health: characterising inequalities in deprivation, access to greenspace, and wellbeing throughout the pandemic

Vikki Houlden
University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

Urban structures can influence a range of health factors, including mental illness (Mair et al., 2008), physical (in)activity (Sallis and Glanz, 2009), and chronic conditions (Vigo et al., 2016). Increasing urbanisation and socio-spatial inequalities have spotlighted poor urban health, reinforcing the necessity for built environments to support wellbeing (Macintyre et al., 2002). The Covid-19 Pandemic threw regional inequalities into sharp relief, not only for health vulnerabilities, but with ‘stay at home’ orders disproportionately impacting those in areas of poorest greenspace provision; notably, BAME and less affluent communities may have been most greatly impacted by their environments (ONS, 2020), due to contextual and compositional factors (Houlden, 2019). This raises the question of how wellbeing has been impacted during the pandemic, for those in environments of different quality and deprivation. This research aims to understand local pandemic impacts on wellbeing. It characterises inequality according to relationships between deprivation, access to greenspace, and wellbeing. Combining multiple data types, including Ordnance Survey Greenspace Mastermap and the UK Longitudinal Household Study Covid sample, we use spatio-temporal analyses to track wellbeing from May 2020-2021 and examine whether access to greenspaces is protective against worsening mental health, particularly for deprived and unequal localities. Results of the preliminary analysis suggest a positive association between access to greenspace and wellbeing throughout the pandemic. We continue to explore how these associations relate to types of greenspaces and across regions with varying deprivation. The results of the full analyses will provide evidence for interventions to support mental wellbeing during post-Covid recovery and future public health crises.
Trajectories of deprivation in the UK

Chris Lloyd¹, Gemma Catney¹, David McLennan², Michael Noble², Paul Norman³
¹Queens University Belfast, UK. ²deprivation.org, UK. ³University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

The UK government’s levelling up agenda takes as its focus “narrowing spatial economic disparities”. In this context, and at a time when Covid-19 has markedly exacerbated existing spatial inequalities, there is an urgent need to better understand why some communities are ‘left behind’. Neighbourhood deprivation measures play a major role in identifying vulnerable communities in the UK, and targeting resources to them. The success of schemes to reduce inequalities should be assessed by measuring changes in deprivation over time, yet this is rarely attempted. This is important because the impact of interventions is likely to be partly a function of an area’s deprivation history (e.g., deindustrialisation, population decline). The paper presents initial findings from a Nuffield Foundation funded project showing how, and in what ways, the trajectories of job losses following the first UK national Covid-19 lockdown relate to the deprivation histories of neighbourhoods. This is achieved by linking employment data from the 2011 Census with the four national indices of multiple deprivation, along with claimant count data for 2020 and 2021. The analyses demonstrate that the resilience of communities to the economic impacts of Covid-19 is partly a function of long-term trends in deprivation and employment. There are, however, notable exceptions to this trend, and the paper begins to unpick some of these complexities while starting to make a case for the inclusion of deprivation histories in the design and implementation of interventions aimed at reducing spatial inequalities between neighbourhoods across the UK.
Delivering urban design and economic growth in peripheral places: Design-led regeneration in West Dunbartonshire, Scotland.

Robert Richardson
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

'Design-led regeneration' has become a common policy approach to pursuing economic recovery, particularly in European and North American cities with post-industrial waterfronts. However, the familiar case studies tend to be core cities with sufficient economic activity to leverage significant private investment and wider political backing. The atypical case of West Dunbartonshire, a small local authority area bordering the Glasgow city-region, provides an insightful example of a constrained local authority pursuing strategic regeneration priorities through urban design. West Dunbartonshire epitomises the west of Scotland's post-industrial legacy of multiple deprivation, derelict land, and limited development pressure. Therefore, West Dunbartonshire Council’s fear of driving investment away had previously led it to readily accept poorly designed development proposals, with the resulting fragmented built environment further entrenching the area's socioeconomic challenges. However, spearheaded by a local politician, West Dunbartonshire Council has recently enacted an internal culture change to support a strategic policy agenda which views urban design as a route to achieving long-term economic growth. This paper presents primary research from a collaborative ESRC doctoral studentship, conducted through semi-structured interviews with local planning stakeholders, and archival work including analysis of planning records and policy. The paper identifies how astute political and professional ‘place leadership’, and the integration of planning and economic development functions, have enabled West Dunbartonshire Council to proactively engage with the local development market in pursuit of long-term public regeneration and ‘placemaking’ priorities. Despite some impact, the Council’s powers of delivery are severely constrained by a reliance on private development capital and the impact of austerity-derived resource constraints on capacity and priorities. The case study therefore reveals the interrelationships between the agency of local leaders and the structural neoliberalising tendencies within local governance, an understanding of which is crucial to achieving urban design and regeneration public policy aims.
Abstract

Accurate and consistent regularised datasets play a fundamental role when analysing and explaining temporal variations in the spatial patterns of ethnic diversity and socio-spatial segregation in urban centres. These patterns are mainly identified at the local level where population composition and densities are explicitly mapped along with uninhabited areas such as parks. In contrast to analyses of aggregated (e.g., administrative) zones where the size and the shape of spatial units are inconsistent, gridded datasets provide more efficient means for comprehensive analysis of population structures over time. This paper investigates the temporal changes of the population distribution by various demographic characteristics (e.g. age, migration background) utilising fine-grained (100m by 100m) gridded data for the capital region of Copenhagen, Denmark. These data enable insight into micro-level variations in the urban fabric associating migration with other demographic and topographic variables. Examining thirty years of change over four time points, we attempt to relate and explain the distribution of migrants in tandem with the educational attainment or income status of the population, the diaspora effect, real estate prices, and the development of urban plans. The study incorporates a wide-ranging set of tools and methods to explore the varying geographies of ethnic diversity in Copenhagen along with patterns of spatial clustering in and out of the Danish ‘parallel societies’ (i.e. compositional data techniques, bivariate visualisations, measures of residential diversity and segregation). By concentrating on Copenhagen as a case study, we examine the potentials of gridded data at high resolution for analysing spatial variability in population composition and report on whether the alleged problematic areas show issues of socio-spatial segregation.
New perspectives on territorial disparities in Europe

Paola Proietti\textsuperscript{1}, Patrizia Sulis\textsuperscript{2}, Carolina Perpina\textsuperscript{2}, Carlo Lavalle\textsuperscript{1}
\textsuperscript{1}European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Italy. \textsuperscript{2}European Commission, Italy

Abstract

Persisting territorial disparities across EU regions represent a challenge to tackle in terms of access to opportunities for people living in these areas. Therefore, it is crucial to produce timely and in-depth analyses related to territorial disparities, to produce evidence informing policies that are coherent with the principle of leaving no place behind. This work introduces a different perspective on the study of places left behind, one that is strongly spatial-embedded and looks at the interrelation of several geographical attributes to identify territories that are more at risk of spatial disparities. It does not define a unique typology of places left behind, but a plurality of them with a degree of vulnerability in terms of lack or insufficient endowment, accessibility, digital connectivity. This novel perspective is applied beyond administrative boundaries and the well-known urban-rural dichotomy. This work presents the results of a quantitative study investigating the stratification of spatial disparities through a multi-scalar and interdisciplinary analysis across EU Member States. Results offer an unprecedented analytical lens, leveraging highly disaggregated data with European coverage from a combination of both traditional and experimental sources, and cutting-edge techniques including Machine Learning and network analysis. The analysis provides an assessment of places left behind by combining variables at the regional and municipal levels: service accessibility, broadband connectivity, remoteness, depopulation, etc. Results of the spatial analysis support policy across Europe with quantitative evidence regarding the geographical location of spatial disparities related to accessibility, connectivity, and general lack of opportunities.
Lost in the Shuffle: Exploring Inequities in the Gridded Representation of Populations

Jeremiah Nieves¹, Forrest Stevens², Greg Yetman³, Dana Thompson⁴, Andrea Gaughan²
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Abstract

Gridded population datasets derived from disaggregative models, where population counts are redistributed from a coarser irregular spatial resolution to smaller scale of standardised grid squares, have become more prevalent and utilised in more applied contexts since the 1990s. Applied contexts include public health surveillance and interventions, climate change and ecology, and other policy planning purposes, to name a few. While there is variation in the specifics of the disaggregation methods for creating these data sets, little research has gone into the fine scale validation of the modelled data, quantification of the uncertainty, and any potential systemic biases that result from the combination of the input data and the disaggregative model process. That is, how well do the modelled populations perform across the spatially varying characteristics of the true underlying population? Here, we utilise a building- to block-level population dataset in Guadalajara, Mexico to explore how one popular machine learning-informed disaggregative modelling procedure does or does not accurately represent the true population across rural and urban contexts, across varying levels of socioeconomic deprivation, and across a wide range of spatial scales. We do this through an extensive bootstrap simulation of artificially coarsened census-based areal population count data, between -5% and -95% of the original units, that are then modelled at each level of aggregation, and validated against the original high-resolution data. We then compare the validated error metrics across scale, urban-rural context, and socioeconomic strata to understand where bias is present and potentially originating within the modelling process.
Investigating trends in urban inequality in a global sample of cities

Frederico Ramos, Justus Uitermark
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract

As the number of people living in urban areas increases steadily, urban inequality becomes a central focus in the debate on the causes and consequences of social inequality. However, a dearth of data makes it difficult to grasp inequality empirically in a wider multidimensional and comparative perspective. In this contribution, we examine trends in urban inequality in a global sample of cities, focusing especially on cities outside Europe and North America. Using data obtained from the Database on Urban Inequality and Amenities, we are able to track trends in urban inequality in different domains, including socio-occupational structures, education, private goods, and public amenities. From the 86 cities included in the database, we selected subsamples of cities depending on the availability of data for each domain and period. With descriptive statistics and data visualization, we show that in all four of these domains inequality is decreasing, although there are important exceptions and glaring regional variation in the pace and intensity of this process. Results show that Gini index for education decreased across all regions. The access to public amenities such as water or electricity also improved in all regions and became nearly universal in Latin American cities. Access to private goods also bettered in general but African cities still present lower access. The participation of middle occupation groups varied within the subsample indicating dissimilarities in the inherent social polarization process with cities seeing their middle classes shrink while others showing a different pattern over the period.
Why vegan geographies? Why now?

Richard White\(^1\), Andrew McGregor\(^2\), Mona Seymour\(^3\), Simon Springer\(^4\)

\(^1\)Sheffield Hallam University, UK. \(^2\)Macquarie University, Australia. \(^3\)Loyola Marymount University, USA. \(^4\)University of Newcastle, Australia

Abstract

Editors and authors of the recently published book “Vegan Geographies: Spaces Beyond Violence, Ethics Beyond Speciesism” (2022, Lantern Press) will draw attention to their research and writings to address the key questions highlighted in the session title.
Supporting Equitable Decision Making in Smart Cities - A Mixed Methods Approach

Eman Zied Abozied¹, Caitlin Robinson², Kate Court¹, Jack Roberts³, Rachel Franklin¹

¹Newcastle University, UK. ²University of Liverpool, UK. ³The Alan Turing Institute, UK

Abstract

Sensors are the backbone of smart city deployments, enabling the collection of data to facilitate evidence-based decision making. One of the integral issues to smart city development is where to place sensors without affecting existing spatial inequalities. This can be addressed by focusing on the coverage of populations, rather than hazards (Robinson and Franklin 2020). To enable this, decision makers should be supported through network creation processes, from network initiation to working through trade-offs in cost and coverage before deployment. In this study we outline the conceptualisation of a decision support framework. We take a mixed methods approach, embedding stakeholder engagement in the design process of the framework that combines algorithmic support with geographic data layers and user input. We focus on our meta choices (Ferretti and Montibeller 2016) taken in designing the framework, and how conceptual decisions translate into operational and technical decisions. The resultant software is a proof of concept on how to think about the network before sensor placement. The decision making in the software is two step and firstly suggests several networks that fulfil the coverage criteria using an algorithm, then enables sensors to be moved according to the priorities and local knowledge of the user, using the data layers to support this. The unique combination of algorithms, code, and stakeholder input along with the co-creation of the tool addresses many issues raised in smart city critiques (Visvizi and Lytras 2019) and offers a novel approach to sensor network conceptualisation.
Who does it better? The role of municipal and provincial expenditure for the alleviation of local inequality

Tatjana Neuhuber, Antonia Schneider
Vienna University of Technology, Austria

Abstract

This paper investigates the role of municipal, regional and provincial characteristics for local economic inequality in Austria, giving special attention to the effects of public expenditure at different spatial entities. In literature, there is still no consensus about firstly, how public expenditure (most notably social spending) affects inequality and secondly, which governmental level should optimally provide (social) goods and services. To investigate the role of public expenditure, we use a comprehensive data set comprising variables measured at municipal, district and provincial level, including various financial variables (e.g. total spending, total revenue, total social spending). A spatial hierarchical generalized linear mixed model approach is utilized, which combines hierarchical models with the widely in spatial regression frameworks used concept of spatial effects. This method has two main advantages over an approach that employs only one of the two. First, it allows us to acknowledge that municipalities are nested within districts which are nested in provinces. Ignoring such a clustered nature of the data might violate the assumption of independence. Second, by introducing interaction effects and hence, spatial spillovers between municipalities, the dependence between entities on the lowest level is acknowledged. In short, this paper contributes to the literature in a twofold way. First, it investigates the role of public expenditure for the reduction of local economic inequality. Second, it compares the efficiency of spending on different administrative units on achieving spatial equality to gain valuable insight for multi-level governance strategies.
What are the key challenges/opportunities/implications facing vegan geographies at this time? How should these be addressed/promoted/recognised?

Catherine Oliver¹, Ophélie Véron²
¹University of Cambridge, UK. ²University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

Editors and authors of the recently published book “Vegan Geographies: Spaces Beyond Violence, Ethics Beyond Speciesism” (2022, Lantern Press) will draw attention to their research and writings to address the key questions highlighted in the session title.
Meanings of recovery and labour agency within Morocco’s Call Centre Sector: Approaching GPN from the micro-level

Jana Treffler
Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

Abstract

Morocco’s Call Centre Industry is one of the major job opportunities for Moroccan youth. Many start working in the sector during their studies, but instead of being a temporary job, people “get stuck” in the sector for it offers relatively high wages. This is despite of the partly bad working conditions, impacts on health and a labour process based on rewards, surveillance, and strong anti-union practices. While unionist lament the “waste” of a whole generation of youth in the industry, the Covid-19 crisis has further transformed work in the sector: work from home means that the labour process, including surveillance was adapted to the home space, while new workers have been employed so that there is no space for everyone to return on site. The transformations are perceived in an ambivalent way by workers, depending on age, socio-economic situation, and gender, while rank-and-file unionists develop strategies of direct solidarity to reduce harmful effects. However, the GPN approach shows, how a multiplicity of actors ranging from multinational companies, state agencies, ministers and businessmen, the King, employer associations, unions but also migrants have all together shaped the sector, along colonial geographies of language and capital. Building on Koenraad Bogarts work, the Call Centre Sector can be regarded as a project of neoliberal globalization which is not only embedded in a transformation of the government of labour relations in Morocco, but also parallels and produces new subjectivities of workers and unionists. Considering the term of recovery against this background, I will examine what meaning recovery has at a micro-level among rank-and-file unionists and what strategies they apply to deal with ongoing and new disasters and what kind of labour agency aiming at recovery is possible for unionists within Morocco’s Call Centre GPN.
Virtual Statecraft: Geographies of Investment and Regulation in London’s Housing Market

Mike Raco\textsuperscript{1}, Callum Ward\textsuperscript{2}, Frances Brill\textsuperscript{3}, Danielle Sanderson\textsuperscript{1}, Jess Ferm\textsuperscript{1}, Nicola Livingstone\textsuperscript{1}, Sonia Freire-Trigo\textsuperscript{1}, Iqbal Hamiduddin\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}University College London, UK. \textsuperscript{2}London School of Economics and Political Science, UK. \textsuperscript{3}University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract

We draw on the findings of a mixed methods research project that has examined the production, regulation, and delivery of housing in London. Our aim is to develop fresh conceptual, empirical, and methodological insights into the growing mobilisation of numbers and targets in contemporary planning systems. First, drawing on recent contributions from O’Brien et al. (2019) we develop their notion of ‘city statecraft’ or ‘the art of city government and management of state affairs and relations’. We discuss how and why their framing of contemporary urban governance captures current trends in contemporary cities, including: the financialisation of housing and infrastructure; the rolling-out of delivery-focused public private partnerships; and the broader political projects that underpin planning priorities. The paper therefore combines these insights with wider writings in urban studies on virtualism or the analysis of theories and governmental practices that seek to make the world conform to pre-existing ideas, rather than describing and explaining its formation. We argue that target-based forms of governance represent the implementation of a virtual statecraft in which the material realities of actual places become simulated worlds, ripe for calculation and re-making. We show the ways in which virtual forms of statecraft are developed and implemented and with what effects on the material outcomes of planning.
Distributed environmental responsibility: intergenerational deliberations on good citizenship in a climate changing world

Ellen van Holstein
RMIT, Australia. University of Melbourne, Australia

Abstract

Individual models of responsibility are celebrated for their ability to make people feel empowered in the face of environmental crisis. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that conceptions of responsibility that place the onus to act on individual people and consumers alone can lead to ineffective policies and distract attention from the structural changes that are needed to decarbonise economies. Responsibility is thus highly politicised and understanding the complexities of this key concept can offer important avenues for working towards more sustainable and just futures. This paper reports on research that engaged young people and their migrant parents in research on climate change to analyse globally disparate experiences of living with environmental pressures and resource insecurity. Interviews showed that in addition to practical knowledge on sustainable practices that parents passed from their country of origin to their children; and that children passed on from school to their parents; young people and their parents negotiated a wide range of views on responsibility for sustainable futures. I use this insight to argue that intergenerational conversations can support a radical break from insidious and increasingly mainstream ideas about individual responsibility for curbing environmental harms and create space to consider more complex and robust entanglements of responsibility that span government, civil society and the individual.
Future teachers as Change Agents for Climate Change Adaption Education - a location-based mobile learning approach

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Abstract

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is widely considered as an effective approach to contain Global Changes. In order to create a resilient society, ESD has to be promoted in educational processes like teacher-training programs which can be seen as an effective approach. Following this idea, future teachers can implement and spread the concept of ESD at their future work at schools and serve as change agents. Due to its effects on a local scale, adaption strategies regarding extreme weathers can be seen as an important and relevant ESD-related topic. Mobile devices offer great potential for teaching on a local scale on field trips because of their location-aware features. Different studies directly refer to location-based mobile learning (LBML) as a promising approach to teach climate change adaption. Mobile devices often combine conventional didactic items for field trips and promote new tasks to enrich the location-based experience. In fact, various studies also confirm the positive effects of LBML towards ESD-related knowledge and ESD-awareness.

The presentation will examine a research project containing the aim to foster adaption to climate change using a LBML approach with future teachers. The students take part in a digitally guided field trip, in which climate change adaption towards extreme weather is taught. The field trip was developed as a self-guided course due to the Covid-Pandemic with different location-based tasks. In order to measure a potential change in attitude towards climate change adaption and the value of digitally supported field trips, a pre-post-design is used, containing a self-developed questionnaire.
Rural migration during the COVID-19 pandemic: moving and staying?

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Abstract

In this introductory presentation we set the scene for the motivation of this session, focussing on the underpinning history of the last 50 years of rural migration research, as well as the contemporary moment's vision for rural migration, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Atmospheric ruptures and the theory of contagion - Affects in Supermarkets after first actions to stem Covid

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Abstract

Following actions to stem Covid-19 the supermarket became an extraordinary environment as one of the only places that allowed everyday social encounters outside the appartement or house. In the supermarket previously unknown disciplinary regulations (keeping a distance, restrictions on the number of shoppers) were accompanied by a change in the material equipment (plexiglass, empty shelves). This change was also accompanied by a change in the atmosphere (Gernot Böhme) of the supermarket. Based on in-depth interviews and participant observations conducted at the beginning of the first lockdown, we will use the concept of contagion (from the sociologist Gabriel Tarde) to analyze the transformed atmosphere in the supermarket. It will be demonstrated that the contagion through the changed atmosphere find expression in affects and in transformed everyday practices. The paper demonstrates that the affective experience of contagion in the supermarket refers to the social position of the customers.
Animals, humans, and their mutual avoidance in the wild: Exploring the human/bear unencounter

Mickey Vallee
Athabasca University, Canada

Abstract

This research project engages with the more-than-human in cultural geographical research by asking how we use our voices and our bodies to prevent encounters with wild animals. In particular, the presentation looks at the nascent field of ecoacoustics and its novel set of methods for understanding the mutually interdependent entities that go into the production of place. Ecoacoustics is the study of the sonic texture of place, defined by the balances and dissonances between zoophonic, anthrophonic, and geophonic information. Based on an ethnographic study of bear/human co-habitation in Western Canada, this research presentation focuses on the ecoacoustic thresholds of avoidance that hunters, hikers, and fishers operationalize in order to avoid bear encounters. Indeed, a component of an animal/human ethic is the way that each entity uses codes to avoid the other. Typically, when such animals as bears are encountered when in the wild, the encounter is usually to the disadvantage to each party. Humans therefore adopt a set of acoustic practices to keep bears from finding their way into human territory, while bears return the favour with their own set of complementary acoustic practices. This, I argue, is an agreed-upon set of ethics that bears contribute to the balance of ecosystems as much as humans do. Thus, the presentation will argue that animals actively shape environments and are invested in the semiotic codes of ecosystems. The presentation is a component of a broader project on unwanted encounters (or unencounters) that explores the acoustic ecologies of wild places.
Concealed cats, revealed rats: Visibility and transparency in predator control in Aotearoa New Zealand

Ally Palmer
University of Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

This panel prompts us to think about the lives of ‘hidden’ animals: those other than the charismatic creatures that command most attention. But what happens when typically charismatic creatures are hidden, while uncharismatic animals are foregrounded, or ‘found’?

In this paper I argue that this is occurring in Aotearoa New Zealand’s conservation-focused efforts to rid itself of non-native ‘pests’, via an assortment of pest control activities and the nationwide campaign to become Predator Free by 2050 (PF2050). Specifically, I discuss how the killing of archetypal pests, such as rats and possums, is foregrounded (though not without controversy) with the goal of uniting New Zealanders in their support for pest control. Meanwhile, there is a ‘cat-shaped hole’ in the PF2050 mission, despite the legacy of Gareth Morgan’s highly publicised 2013 ‘Cats To Go’ campaign. Furthermore, although numerous local pest control projects do kill feral cats, they often deliberately avoid publicising it. This trepidation is primarily a product of concern about domestic and stray cats being caught up in ‘feral’ cat control, indicating differential visibility and concern amongst categories of cats.

Drawing on qualitative research with conservation and pest control professionals and critics, I use the case of PF2050 to explore strategies deployed by conservationists for making certain (specifically, violent) human-animal relationships visible and others hidden. This speaks not only to ongoing discussions in geography about ‘violent care’ in conservation, but also to how practices of transparency simultaneously reveal and conceal, and how animal charisma and grievability reflect hierarchies both within and between species.
The birds and the beetles: animal archives and the making of ‘Arctic ecology’

Johanne Bruun
University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract

This paper examines the role of animal bodies in mediating across the spaces of ‘field’ and ‘archive’ in animal ecology, drawing out the topological entanglements between the naturalistic field and natural history archives. Conceptually, it points to the prosthetic qualities of the archive, namely its capacity to simultaneously delimit and expand the field by facilitating novel ways of seeing and knowing it. The field, in turn, is a necessary source of animal bodies (or body parts) without which there is no archive.

Empirically, the paper hones in on the quiet animal presences of a series of Oxford University-led expeditions to Svalbard in the 1920s, which have since been hailed as significant moments in the history of animal ecology. Looking beyond polar bears and huskies – animals so emblematic of Arctic exploration –, this paper centres the lives, deaths, and material redrafting of seemingly unassuming animal species: mites, aphids, and spiders alongside terns, gulls, and ducks. Collected by the hundreds, their bodies were circulated across archival institutions, redrafted as markers of generalisable ecological knowledge and of quintessentially ‘Arctic’ nature. These animals, and others like them, were enrolled as part of an archival substrate upon which both ecological knowledge systems and British imperial knowledge structures extending beyond the Svalbard archipelago were built.

It is argued that paying due attention to how unassuming animal species are put to work – their lives in the field and their archival afterlives – is key to understanding the formation of wide-reaching bio-cum-geopolitical structures relevant to environmental governance and region-making.
Carceral geographies, displacement and animals in the Aegean: a diachronic review from the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) to today’s refugee camp

Dimitrios Bompoudakis
University of Kent, UK

Abstract

This presentation is an attempt to situate animals in the carceral and military geographies of displacement of the Aegean Sea in Greece. The Aegean Sea has (re)emerged as a strategic geopolitical location, as part of last decade’s refugee and migrant flows through the Mediterranean into Europe and Greece’s island camps – with some authors speaking of a Black Mediterranean to signal the African origin of many of the displaced. However, the Aegean Archipelago was a strategic location in the late 1940s too, as a central geopolitical arena of the US Truman Doctrine. During the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the US-funded Greek state forcibly displaced thousands upon thousands of men, women and children to the “desert islands” of the Aegean, in army-run camps and prisons. This presentation tells a diachronic story of island displacement, linking the two different eras by centring the role of non-human animals. Using published literature from the displaced, of various literary forms (poems, novels, testimonies, articles), I show that non-human animals played plural roles during for the displaced, many of them unaccounted for in the literature. Among others animal were companion species, elements of torture, gifts, food, health remedies, pests, and importantly, vectors of resistance. I close by highlighting how these contributions of non-human animals to displaced lives speak of hopeful and convivial multispecies encounters.
Abstract

In the wonderful book A Theory of Shopping (1998) anthropologist Daniel Miller understands the giving of gifts as an act of love. In line with Miller’s Hegelian approach to material culture, the act of gifting objectifies one’s sense of being responsible for, and being claimed by, another. It is precisely because love is ungraspable, uncontainable and unrepresentable, that its material manifestation is required. Love, for Miller, needs to be commodified. The idea that love needs materiality is one that geographers should take seriously. For many years geographers approached the material world as a representation of deeper epistemological forces. But what if it were the opposite? What if our everyday landscapes were not expressions of something inside us but desperate attempts to make something transcendent and untouchable real and present? In this framing, geographical representations are not the materialisations of something present but what I term a dream of presence: the dream that love (our love or our beloved’s) can be made tangible, touchable, real and enduring.
What is indigenous knowledge and how does it differ from Western science ideologies

Alby Marsh\textsuperscript{1,2}, Rose Kuru\textsuperscript{1}, Simon George\textsuperscript{1}, Beccy Ganley\textsuperscript{1}

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Abstract

It is well established that Western principles, values and science knowledge dominate the science space internationally. Ignoring indigenous knowledge in research and practice exacerbates rather than mends the divide between Western science and indigenous knowledge systems. In addition, by not using all the tools available, the ecosystems we seek to protect suffer, as does the fabric of our society.

The paper explores a path for elevating and recognizing knowledge of indigenous peoples, specifically to complement and improve one-dimensional research paradigms. A review of literature on indigenous traditional ecological knowledge from Aboriginal Australians, Aboriginal Canadians, Polynesians, and Māori, notes similarities and differences in the types of knowledge held and the application of that knowledge. From maintaining key habitats to belief systems that place humans within instead of above the natural world, and to draw on a multitude of traditional practices that facilitate inclusivity over exclusivity and the synergistic interaction with our natural ecological systems.

However – integrating Western science practices and indigenous knowledge is not simple. The colonial approach of appropriating and absconding with knowledge is outdated, ineffective and offensive. Instead, new methods must be co-created to facilitate respectful use of knowledge from different sources. Respecting and negotiating the borders of knowledge systems can benefit and enrich dialogues about shared ecological and research outcomes.
‘When is a bee a ‘bee’?’ - On Virtual Bees, in and out of Time

Diane Borden
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Abstract

Bees’ are chimeras - the word itself often evoking an amalgam of many distinct bee species. In popular imaginaries within the UK, the word may conjure an image of a small insect awash in yellow and black, donning a fuzzy coat dusted with pollen, buzzing around a flower or hive in the pursuit of making honey. It may also evoke imagery surrounding ‘insect apocalypse’ (NYT 2018), with honeybees becoming proxies for all ‘bees’ in imaginaries of mass collapse. Increasing digitization of multiple bee species offers visual media that simultaneously clarify and further abstract ‘bees’. Bee photography may aid in taxonomic identification processes on platforms like iNaturalist; yet, ‘cryptic bees’ impede successful taxonomic assessments. Within surmountable cases, various bees remain unverifiable online without accompanying genetic materials. Similarly, scientific studies mapping bee abundance can render ‘bees’ multiple but indistinct. The singularity of a ‘bee’ thus obscures the multitudes it seeks to evoke.

This paper draws on literatures across the digital humanities (Parikka, 2010; von Essen et al. 2021), more-than-human geographies (Brice, 2014), and critical time studies (Bastian, 2009; Birth, 2012) to situate the discursive and more-than-human relationships in the making of ‘bees’ digitally and otherwise. Drawing on Bergson’s ideas of the ‘virtual’ and time—particularly duration—I demonstrate not only how bees become known, but essentially when a bee becomes a ‘bee’. Thus, ‘virtual’ bees are at once homogenizing and diversifying, strategically hiding and exposing particular bees across different spatiotemporal scales, differentially rendering bees ‘valuable’ scientifically, economically, and socially.
Enduring love: Dwelling in vulnerability

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Abstract

What is it to love someone with Alzheimer’s, to dwell in a refrain of absence and re-emergent loss, and to dwell-with that vulnerability? How does such love mobilize, energize, but also persist in woundedness? In this paper, we aim to think love as an event which abides. While much has been made of the transformative event of love – of its power to disrupt and displace, of its capacity to re-ontologize and redraw subjectivities – we focus rather on its persistence. We look to the event of love as a slow wounding, considering it in terms of dwelling with the vulnerability of living. If a geographies of love would describe a certain exposure to the other, then love’s persistence entails dwelling-with that exposure, and all the wounds, disruptions and surprises it offers. Understood this way, vulnerability is not to be mistaken for something passive, but rather is precisely about acting and about making acting vulnerable. Thinking with a series of vignettes – living with Alzheimers, enduring a miscarriage – we consider these loves as events that both wound – exposes, subjects, encroaches, erases, forces, maintains – and offers situated avenues for abiding these wounds through their slowness and durability.
Love is an Island: Love, Commerce and Sadomasochism on Love Island, F-Boy Island and Temptation Island

Virginia Blum
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Abstract

“Steamy hookups, heartbreak, and true love” reads an advertisement for season 4 of Temptation Island, the reality program that invites couples to challenge their relationships with the temptation of “fantasy singles.” Love Island, F-Boy Island, Too Hot to Handle all stage competitive love on island paradises.

The tropical island is the love trope par excellence. It is a love incubator where one can shed both real world pressures and clothing. The island is infantilizing. The participants have all the time in the world to focus on love since everything is provided for them. At the same time, the island locks them into a nightmarish scene of temptation, rivalry, and humiliation. Moreover, there is no actual separation from the “real world” inasmuch the potential economic benefits (gaining more followers and “clout” the longer one lasts) are always front and center. That love can be valuable in real world currency is central to the sadomasochistic intimacies forged on these islands of love. Sadomasochistic relationships obtain on multiple levels—from contestant interactions to the implicit appeal for “audience love” that determines either an abundance of adoring Instagram followers—or haters. This talk will reflect on the sadomasochistic intensities fundamental to the appeal of such programming—both among the cast members and between the cast and the audience who relish the spectacle of beautiful people suffering on an island paradise that is a thinly disguised prison of love’s aggressive fallout.
Distances and Desires

John Wylie
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Abstract

In ‘The Blue of Distance’ Rebecca Solnit identifies a human love for distances – for the colour blue, for far horizons. For Solnit, this distance is an affective dimension characterised by a bittersweet, simultaneous sense of desire and loss. She also argues that this is a distance that humans can discover with time and maturity. She writes: ‘the blue of distance comes with time, with the discovery of melancholy, of loss, the texture of longing, of the complexity of the terrain we traverse, and with the years of travel’.

It took me many years to understand that what fascinated me about landscape was distance. I think that I refused to admit this to myself because I did not want to reckon with the implications of a desire for distances, as I understood them. This desire could be acquisitive, colonising or possessive, for example. Or it could be voyeuristic, seeking to peer at and disclose distances whilst remaining ‘at a distance’ in this look, secluded and hidden from view as it is. I couldn’t see how to disentangle or distil any more positive sense of distance from these inheritances. In this paper, I will try to reconcile Solnit’s insights into distance with these concerns, and acknowledge the contours and horizons of my own love for distances.
I die you

Thomas Dekeyser
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Abstract

Can we ever love a person, thing, idea in itself? When we say we love a person, an object, an animal, an idea, we may never be able love it as such, but only ever our relation to it. If this is the case, then love displaces the ‘other’. In this paper, I offer a modest attempt at approaching this claim by way of the writings of Clarice Lispector. In her tales, love as displacement takes the form of death and dying. Expressing her troubled love for a city, the protagonist of ‘Brasília’ proclaims: “I die you”. In this story, and others written by Lispector, love is, indeed, always a matter of life and death, not simply because love may turn out to be suffocating, entrapping, cruel or possessive, but because it requires, as its condition, an existential dismantling of the other. Within Lispector, this is not to be understood as the bringing-to-an-end of one person by another, but instead is a dismantling that is something other, something harder and harsher, than human. Having a life of its own, love simultaneously befalls human affairs whilst remaining distinct from it. Read alongside Schopenhauer’s idea of the ‘will to live’, the paper argues, Lispectorian love gathers force because of, rather than despite, its incomprehensibility and impersonality.
(Maternal) Symbolic or Imaginary love?: The difference that ontology makes.

Heidi Nast
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Abstract

This paper explores the difference that ontology makes in theorizing love. It does so in part by calling attention to a maternal Symbolic that unfolded in human contexts across upper Paleolithic times, a Symbolic ontologically distinct from the Lacanian Symbolic of the Father. Whereas the first is grounded in the dyadism of the pregnant body—what I refer to as a relational ontology, the second is grounded in the enclosure and privatization (foreclosure) of that body in the Name of the Father. The analysis focuses on relational ontology in sub-Saharan Africa because that is where its archaeological tracks begin and where it assumed its most elaborate signifying proportions and achieved its greatest material power. Whereas there is considerable evidence that those H sapiens sapiens migrating out from the subcontinent 65,000 or so years ago likewise depended on a maternal Symbolic, this would begin changing in Eurasian agrarian contexts roughly 12,000 BP as the Law emerged to seize and alienate the maternal body. In telling this story, I suggest that Lacan’s Imaginary is artefactual, its mapping of the maternal onto psychosis having to do with how the ontologizing of private property, since Neolithic ‘agricultural’ times, has circumscribed how the maternal body speaks. Whereas the maternal Symbolic speaks difference through a language of relationality, generativity and play, one that considers life as dyadically expansive and intimate, the Name of the Father forecloses difference. Through a scopic regime of sex, it locates and immobilizes the maternal body to accumulate and possess the value it produces. In so doing, it makes life into a singularizing site of capture and splitting, with sex broadly determining who owns and who can be owned. The question is whether or not ‘love’ can be contained by the divisional dynamics of Lacan’s Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic, or if love might be better understood relationally through a maternal Symbolic that entertains a larger universe of intimacy and play.
After love: meditations on love and finitude

Anna Secor
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Abstract

In the opening scene of the film ‘After Love’ (2020), a woman is fixing tea in a darkened kitchen, chatting with her husband who has retreated to the living room just out of sight. By the time she carries the tea down the hallway and arrives at the illuminated distance, the man is dead. The scene cuts and the story, in which the mourning widow discovers her husband has a second family, begins. But who or what in this film is ‘after love’? In what sense has the knot of love been cut, either before or after the man’s death? In the doubled and disjunctive relations of the film, it comes to seem that ‘after love’ may name not a state but a problem, even a paradox. That is, how does love, as a momentary and contingent encounter, shift to become something that is articulated and inscribed even beyond a life? What of love, after love? This paper takes ‘After Love’ as a spur to reconsider questions of love and finitude, or what Lacan calls ‘the destiny as well as the drama of love’.
Transforming the subject—from past to future with love

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Abstract

This paper explores love as a force that transforms the subject, reorienting it from a lost past to an unknown future. Its empirical occasion is a scene of romantic love, telling the story of Robbie, a former coal miner in Australia. Robbie’s life changed after the closure of his coal mine workplace, a loss that catalysed a chain of events that would lead him to a ship in Antarctica, where he would fall in love with his pen pal Nicolette, and come to long for a new life away from mining. This paper thinks with this story to unfold how love can compel us to rethink questions of subjective transformation: of how the self transforms, is transformed and always already exists in states of transformation, driven by the yawning pull of yearning and desire.

Understanding the self as constituted through others, it explores how transformations of the subject can come about through affective intensities that fold otherness into the self. Without offering love as a catch-all answer to life’s ills (after all, how could one manufacture love?) or affirming/critiquing the impulses gathered under the name of love, this paper examines how affective experiences such as love can work to repair bodies: shifting people’s evaluation of past events, generating new lines of time, and reorienting bodies towards the future, even as those futures remains fundamentally unknown. I suggest that understanding how affective intensities participate in the transformation of the self can offer new points of entry into geographical concepts such as identity, desire, normativity, and everyday life.
Socio-metabolic toxicity, inflammatory rhythms and social class by the Liverpool docks

Leo Singer
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Abstract

My talk will present a theoretical framework for a study of the interaction between the rhythms of the port of Liverpool and the everyday life of its workers and residents. The logistic area in focus suffers from the externalities of the global social metabolism mediated by the expanding port: political abandonment, growing volumes of lorry traffic and a whole range of environmental stressors generate rising levels of premature death and multimorbidity. Inspired by Lefebvre’s rhythmanalytic sensibility, my research will zoom in to the toxic fires and smokes from the docks’ scrap metal yards and their dysrhythmic appearance in the lives of the local residents with spikes in COPD emergency admissions. The theoretical aim is to understand the embodiment of socio-metabolic toxicity as life course rhythmic entrainment cascading from the global through the everyday down to the cellular levels of the biosocial totality.

The focus of the urban geographies of health has been shifting from the level of whole populations (region, city or neighbourhood) to capturing the individual mobility of the everyday life. While tracking technologies offer to researchers vastly more opportunities to ‘put the finger on the pulse’ of a resident, this comes at the cost of theoretical blind-spots and analytical reductionism. Attempts at biosocial synthesis suffer from too much of the bio- and not enough/ill-defined socio-. My presentation will propose a methodology taking into account the multilevel context as perceived simultaneously in the everyday life. This means longitudinal sensory monitoring of the environmental stressors and the biomarkers of inflammation and circadian dysrhythmia, combined with life histories of the residents. It is inspired by the ecosocial theory of embodiment (Krieger 2011) and biosensory ethnography (Winz and Söderström 2021).
A Tale of Two Avenues in Revolutionary Tunis

Dena Qaddumi
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Abstract

Studies of revolutions rarely emphasise the city as a key site to trace their evolution. State perspectives dominate this literature and focus on the actions of formal governmental actors towards achieving political transitions. The wave of revolutions that began in late 2010 and spread across the Arab world in the subsequent years seemed to shift this perspective. Arab cities became revolutionary centres not only nationally but regionally and globally. At astonishing pace, their iconic public spaces turned beacons of revolutionary spatial practices.

This presentation will chronicle the ongoing evolution and competition between two central avenues in Tunis as revolution unfolds in the city and the state. Avenue Habib Bourguiba, designed as a pedestrian boulevard during the French colonial period, was the last major standoff between the regime and the people in 2011 when then President Ben Ali fled the country. Perpendicular to Avenue Bourguiba, is Avenue Mohamed al-Khamis. Featuring monumental architecture, this avenue was planned in post-independent Tunisia as an exemplification of the regime and the urban development of Tunis. It is here that the new regime has faced a glaring predicament after 2011: how to symbolically disentangle itself from the old regime while materially relying on its remnants. The analysis of these two avenues, and the developing spatial practices in each, will demonstrate how their contestation is predicated on the collective memories associated with each site, their urban topography, and their perceived values of political and cultural legitimacy.
Feeling Stuck: The role of social class in millennial loneliness in County Durham

Jessie Kelly
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Abstract

This paper draws on the findings from PhD research into the geographies of loneliness of millennials in County Durham. This research has found that social class matters, and that it plays a profound role in the incidence, experience and navigation of loneliness for the young adults in this study. Living and working following the 2008 economic recession and austerity measures has meant that millennials are confronted with high rates of unemployment, stagnated wages, financial precarity, and a reduced access to services, which previous generations have not necessarily faced. For those millennials living in County Durham, many of these issues are exacerbated by the area’s particular geography and history, such as deindustrialisation; disinvestment by central government; and disproportionate austerity cuts. This spatial-temporal context and the working class identities of the millennials in this research has resulted in feelings of being stuck, where these structural inequalities and fewer opportunities has made it difficult to move on, get past, and get on with ‘life’. These feelings of being ‘held back’ were articulated as being key to the feelings of loneliness. Social class therefore matters, and this paper explores how those from working class backgrounds, living in traditionally working class places, are not only faced with entrenched inequalities, but their health and wellbeing are also at stake, as they are left vulnerable to feelings of loneliness and isolation.
Interfacing political economy and everyday rhythms - Examining the Obama Presidential Center and everyday life in Jackson Park, Chicago

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Abstract

This article examines the effects of a major civil project, the Obama Presidential Center (OPC) in Jackson Park on Chicago’s Southside, on the everyday rhythms of those who frequent the park in which the Center will be located. The OPC redesigns 19 acres of historic Jackson Park in what is considered an effort to revitalize the area and establish a major democratic institution. However, some grassroots groups oppose the alteration to the original design of the park as it will limit access to public space and because it has the potential to facilitate gentrification and displacement in surrounding communities. Our article investigates this familiar tension of development through an examination of the interface of political economy and everyday rhythms. While Jackson Park is a location of free park activity rhythms, the OPC is a governmental civic institution set to exert a new rhythmic order in how Jackson Park should be used. We argue that these new rhythms transform the park, firstly, into a space to commemorate the legacy of Barack Obama as the first Black President and the history of the Black life and culture on Chicago’s South Side and beyond, and, secondly, as the new economic powerhouse for economic transformation of disadvantaged communities nearby. The examination of the OPC draws attention to how major infrastructural projects change the rhythms of urban spaces and can provide concrete perspectives on how capitalist urban redevelopment becomes manifest in people’s lived everyday experiences and routines. Thus, our article foregrounds the importance of a political economy of rhythm(analysis) to decipher how rhythms not only shape bodily spatial interactions and practices but also determine the outcome of economic development and urban transformation.
Frictions in Privileged Mobilities: Australian and British family migrating to Singapore

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Abstract

In his politics of mobility, Cresswell (2010, 2015) highlights how movements such as migration are subject to resistance, what he conceptualises as friction. Friction has the ability to shape the speed and rhythm through which people move through place, the routes that they take. This means that friction has the ability to shape and re-shape ongoing negotiations of mobility and belonging through space and time —what in migration studies we might refer to as migration journeys. This paper examines the notion of the family as friction in amongst Australian and British migrant journeys to and from Singapore. It uses friction as a conceptual framing to look at how different constellations of the family work to speed up, slow down and change mobility.
The transnational lives of the Irish in Britain and the impact of the pandemic related travel restrictions

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Abstract

There is a long history of migration from Ireland to Britain for economic reasons. Irish migrants are increasingly highly qualified and highly skilled individuals for whom there are no legal impediments to movement or employment in Britain. The increase in availability of air travel and the short flight times to Britain has prompted a growth in weekly or monthly commuting and, for more long-term migrants, this has also enabled an expectation of quick and easy return when desirable or necessary. This paper is based on the results of a survey of transnational families across Ireland and Britain and how they were impacted by the recent pandemic related travel restrictions. It was prompted by a discourse from the Irish government and the media, during the summer of 2020, which implied that travel outside the country was non-essential and that foreign visitors, including the Irish abroad, were to be treated with suspicion. In this there was a failure to acknowledge the many Irish families who are separated by migration and those for whom regular travel between these islands was an essential, if taken for granted, aspect of life. The paper presents evidence for the interconnected lives people live across Ireland and Britain, the adjustments that they had to make to adapt to the restrictions on movement and how, for some, this led to a reassessment of their sense of belonging, identity and home. Despite the growth in digital communications in enabling connection the research highlights that physical movement and regular reconnection with people and place remain essential in migrant lives.
Family Ties and Life-Course Choices of Skilled Australian Migrants in Singapore

Theodora Lam, Brenda Yeoh
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Abstract

Skilled migrants have long been envied (and feared) by the general population for their privileged status, glamourized hypermobility and red-carpet treatment from receiving states. Often valued solely for their economic contributions to receiving and sending societies, research on this migrant population have often neglected to account for the “multiplex componentry” of migration that extend beyond economic imperatives, rationalities and logics (Carling & Collins 2018: 911). This includes paying attention to the imaginative, affective and emotional dimensions of migration, its social and cultural relations, obligations and frictions, as well as politics and power relations (e.g. Yeoh & Huang 2011; Carling & Collins 2018; Borisova 2020). More importantly, studying them as individual economic agents have failed to consider them as “also social, cultural and political agents marked by race/ethnicity, class and gender” who make “life-course choices … (entry into partnership, having a child, becoming home owners and retirement plans) which then shape their future migration decisions” (Bailey and Mulder 2017, 2691). Using the experiences of Australian skilled migrants (and their families) in Singapore, this paper thus seeks to explore how their life-course choices are characterized by synchronicities (cf. Erel & Ryan 2019), both successful and failed, between their work/professional lives and that of their personal partnerships and/or familyhood. It explores how career and migration decisions are often entangled with or linked to many other aspects of their personal lives and/or relations – serendipitous or planned – such as intimate relationships, reproductive choices, political situations and sense of belonging at different junctures of their life-course. In so doing, the paper seeks to respond to Bailey and Mulder’s (2017) call to give more attention to the interplay of life course choices and the institutional focus in the study of highly skilled migrants.
Not all ‘fake news’ is big news: Social media, localised misinformation and the politics of neighbourhood change

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Abstract

When, in 2014, Waltham Forest Council won £30 million in Transport for London funding to invest in new cycling infrastructure, the Council not only handed the scheme’s implementation to its transport engineers, but also the public consultation. By most accounts, the engineers handled it technocratically and clumsily, and discussions soon gravitated to Twitter and Facebook, where local cycling campaigners became embroiled in highly antagonistic exchanges with opposing voices. Local policymakers were suddenly met with a new problem: the rapid circulation of misinformation, ranging from claims of near-death experiences, caused by emergency services unable to enter retrofitted streets, to theories that the entire scheme was an elaborate cover for state-led gentrification. The case of Waltham Forest’s ‘Mini Holland’ controversy is not a one-off. The proliferation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) under the UK government’s ‘Active Travel’ policy and fund, which was accelerated during the pandemic, has spawned similar discord and misinformation via social media, in some cases leading to policy reversals. Drawing on a mixed-method analysis of social media contributions in the Waltham Forest case, we discuss the implications of localised misinformation increasingly circulating through social media platforms, where capacities – institutional or otherwise – for fact-checking may be weak, non-existent or inconsequential.
Assessing the potential for Nature-based coastal adaptation on the German Baltic coast

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Abstract

Climate change and its impacts threatens population, assets and ecosystems on the German Baltic coast. Coast defence counteract this trend but, with time becomes economically unattractive, technically ineffective and ecologically disadvantageous. ECAS-Baltic explores and models the potential benefits of nature-based coastal adaptation strategies in an integrative and transdisciplinary approach. We combine geomorphological analyses and coupled hydro-morphodynamic modelling (in particular of the stability and durability of coastal protection measures and their effects on coastal morphology and flood risk). Further, we assess the potential ecological, social and economic implications of the chosen strategies, as well as obstacles to, and instruments towards, societal acceptance.

We actively engage multiple strategic stakeholders in:

- Co-Designing the project via the definition of long-term ecological, social and economic goals and criteria for nature-based coastal management and case study selection
- Co-Developing nature-based coastal protection strategies taking into account multiple societal interests and relevant legal regulations at regional (German Baltic coast) and local (two case studies) levels.
- Co-evaluating the ecological, social and economic impacts of the selected nature-based coastal protection strategies at both levels.

Project outcomes will be optimized in terms of decision theory and prepared as policy and management recommendations towards greater nature-based coastal protection.
Towards transformation and justice: home truths for housing, health, and academia:

Leah Chan
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Abstract

“There’s probably more knowledge in this room than in the royal college of whatever” (Forum Theatre Participant, 2020).

In challenging the epistemic violence that is embedded in attitudes towards home and homelessness, participatory methods can support communities who are already working towards epistemic justice. This paper explores the experiences of participatory methods in my PhD research on homelessness, houselessness, and the use of creative arts in activism. Here, ‘recovery’ is both individualised and collective experiences characterised by the sharing, ‘shifting’, and creation of stories. I reflect on participating as both a researcher and as a participant with experiences of homelessness in a forum theatre process which led to our performance of Lucky Tries... and Tries Again, and a collaborative poetry-film we named Jenga. Drawing on observations, interviews, and an extensive research diary, this research contributes to conversations about the challenges and means by which we can move towards social transformation and justice.

Lucky Tries... and Tries Again is a forum theatre performance based on both the lived experiences of performers, and the peer research done by Homeless Health Peer Advocates in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Jenga is a collaborative poetry-film done with people from different regions of England which was part of a national campaign: The Fight For Home.
Labyrinths as tools of resilience

Lydia Nightingale
n/a, UK

Abstract

Labyrinths as tools of resilience

In response to the challenges of the pandemic, a park volunteer created a labyrinth during the first lockdown. This intervention was selected because labyrinths are used as walking meditations.

Using freely available materials of fallen twigs and branches, a 9 metre diameter circular labyrinth with one continuous, meandering path was constructed.

The site-specific environmental artwork became a free, community resource that is available 24/7/365. The Labyrinth provides opportunities for contemplation for those of any belief system and none. As an outdoor, 1 person at a time, no-touch experience, it also addresses the needs of those cautious about transmission risks.

This paper considers: alternative approaches to walking and leisure when movement and travel was restricted; walking activity within public parks; blending of a volunteer’s role and a therapist’s role; absence of formal permission, bureaucracy and feedback systems; creative initiatives in community settings; impact of governmental guidance.
How useful is the concept of lived experience within anti-poverty campaigning?

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Abstract

Lived experience is a term which has become increasingly used within both academic literature and social justice movements, including anti-poverty campaigning. Defined as “the experience(s) of people on whom a social issue, or combination of issues, has had a direct impact” (Sandhu, 2017: 5), lived experience has become an important element within research which seeks to prioritise traditionally marginalised voices and perspectives. Within an anti-poverty campaigning context, Goldstraw (2021) argues that it is not enough to simply define poverty, but those involved in decision making processes need to understand it, which can only be done by including people who have direct experience of poverty around the decision-making table.

But how useful is lived experience as an academic and campaigning approach? This paper will begin with a review of some of the literature around lived experience - how is it defined and how has it been utilised within geographic and anti-poverty work? I will then move on to discuss insights from my PhD research, which has been done in collaboration with Thrive Teesside, an anti-poverty campaigning charity. I will examine Thrive’s attempts to put lived experience at the heart of decision making processes, highlighting both its successes and limitations, before concluding with suggestions of how a lived experience approach can be best utilised moving forward.


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Abstract

This paper explores the everyday navigation of heat in chronically exposed tropical cities. Taking the global southern city of Karachi as a focal point, the paper argues that what transforms heat from a hazard into a disaster is the extent to which people are exposed and vulnerable to its effects. As we demonstrated, everyday practices play a pivotal, often overlooked, role in managing the effects of heat – shaping both the production of extreme heat as a crisis event and the conceptualization of climate resilience.

Drawing on the results of a heat-management survey during the Covid-19 pandemic, and subsequent mixed-method observations of everyday life in Karachi, we show how everyday practices create deliberate and incidental relief from heat. We examine how everyday heat management practices are spatialised, embodied and gendered in ways that determine the context and company in which exposure and vulnerability can be deployed; and create specific patterns of exposure and vulnerability.

Our discussion is set against the backdrop of Karachi’s informal, low-income settlements where approximately 62% of the population reside. Understanding how Karachi’s geography contributes to the production of a disaster allows us to imagine an adaptive approach to heat: one in which micro-interventions to provide socially acceptable, safe-shade structures at street and community scale become part of a wider cooperative and collective cooling modality for urban informal settlements.
Decentering flood adaptation between the exceptional and the everyday

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Abstract

As climate change exacerbates flooding conditions in cities across the globe, governments focus on strengthening infrastructural networks to cope with exceptional water levels. Yet, ‘big infrastructure’ approaches to flood control have come under increasing scrutiny. Critics question, on the one hand, the effectiveness of building barriers that can be eventually overtopped by rising waters. On the other, they also highlight the ways ‘big infrastructure’ (hard/soft) exacerbates old vulnerabilities and creates new ones for marginalized communities who are already disproportionately affected by floods. This scholarship traces flows of knowledge and finance and reveals how technomanagerial approaches to flood adaptation travel, consolidate, and persevere over time, calling for more inclusive and progressive practices based on residents’ lived experiences with flooding. This paper answers this call by reviewing current literature on alternative flood adaptation practices that emerge in the spaces of the everyday. Our aims are three-fold: (1) to make visible other ways of living with and through floodwaters, (2) to trace the logics and concepts that underlie community-based responses to flooding, and (3) to identify the trade-offs and limits to adaptation when the exceptional meets the everyday. Ultimately, we aim to decenter knowledge production and move beyond western-centric infrastructural responses to highlight alternative, more ordinary practices, and their potential linkages. In so doing, we hope to make visible the transgressive potential of adaptation networks emerging in everyday spaces within and across the urban South, and explore other approaches to living with water as entry points to rethink flood adaptation globally.
Walking for well-being in coastal industrial landscapes

Rosie Knowles
Royal Holloway University of London, UK

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the everyday lived, embodied and sensory experiences of walking and well-being along the coastline of the Welsh industrial town of Port Talbot. I work with a men’s mental health walking group which seeks to tackle both mental and physical illness in the community, especially as a result of COVID-19. I explore how the men’s working group tackles loneliness and isolation in a community which suffers from high rates of unemployment and declining steel industries. There are issues with men experiencing toxic masculinity or a sense of loss of identity through lack of employment in the area and cultural/historical traditional gendered values. The embodied practice of walking by the industrial coastline, can enable both social and bodily landscape connections to arise, fostering well-being experiences in a potentially toxic/contaminated environment. I situate the paper in therapeutic landscape literatures exploring feminist and everyday encounters with the coast and use a walking interview approach.
Paths for People: Walking and belonging in the suburban edgeland

Robert Mathlin
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

This presentation is based on my MSc dissertation. It brings together the geographic concept of edgelands (Shoard, 2000) with a sociological understanding of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006) through considering the impact of the Ramblers Cymru, Paths for People project ran in Coychurch, an out-of-town housing commuter estate. Seven participants walked the new community route independently several times over the summer of 2021. To keep a hold of the embodied and sensory experience of walking, participants kept a multisensory diary which was discussed over Zoom at the end of the summer. We were apart but together in sharing our walks (Rose, 2021). In discussing and sharing our walks, themes around connection to the path, accessibility, and the physically and socially changing path emerged. These themes are linked together by questions of belonging. Thinking through who and what are allowed to belong on this path begins to elucidate how edgelands are negotiated spaces.
Social prescribing in coastal industrial 'therapeutic' landscapes

Rosie Knowles
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Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the concept of therapeutic landscapes in the industrial coastal town of Port Talbot in South Wales. Often therapeutic landscape engagements have depicted bluescapes as intrinsically therapeutic ignoring the different textures, volumes and depths of oceanic bluespace encounters in contaminated and industrial settings. I wish to explore the complexities of embodied and everyday experiences of interacting with the coast in the heavily industrialised town of Port Talbot, South Wales, known for its economy dependent on the steelworks. My paper draws on research conducted in Port Talbot with a local men’s mental health walking group, community art groups and wild swimming groups to explore the different ways that socially prescribed activities are impacting the health and well-being of the local community. I take a feminist and auto-ethnographic approach, utilising creative methods to explore embodied and sensory experiences of health, well-being and navigating toxic and polluted ‘therapeutic’ landscapes. My methods include walking interviews, story-telling and drawing, to explore the effectiveness of social prescribing in an industrial community experiencing challenges of unemployment and increasing social and mental health problems, and unpack whether all experiences of bluespace are intrinsically therapeutic.
Provoking arrhythmia to reveal the everyday: Utilising creative methodologies to experience another’s rhythms revealing hidden knowledge.

Natalie Bamford
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

Rhythmanalysis draws to our attention the taken-for-granted nature of the rhythms of everyday life, highlighting how, often, it is only when something disrupts that rhythm, an arrhythmia, that we become aware of it. This is echoed in philosophical notions that indicate objects only jump out of our everyday once they malfunction. But why should this moment of arrhythmia stem from malfunction, from illness or distress? Could we in fact utilise moments of disruption to reveal our everyday and learn from the rhythms that present themselves?

Artists are masters in provoking a moment of arrhythmia. Artistic practices can take the everyday and alter it, revealing something new through a constant subversion of our expectation of the everyday. Artists are able to incite an arrhythmia within the viewer uncovering hidden knowledge. In my research I utilise this subversion, but draw it from the participants themselves rather than my own imposition.

The project places the researcher in a position to receive another person’s perception of walking in the city, to take on their everyday rhythm and attempt to enact it. Lefebvre challenges the rhythmanalyst to experience the rhythms in order to grasp them, to be involved in a rhythm in a bodily way. Utilising the tenants of hermeneutic phenomenology, creative methodologies, and theories of arrhythmia outlined above; the presented project will showcase a series of directions issued by participants, subsequently followed by myself. I will be attempting to experience Newcastle city centre through the rhythms of other citizens, and in doing so will not only stimulate an arrythmia to my own lifeworld rhythms, but also the participant who volunteered their perceptions, by presenting their views in conversation with my own.
Somewhere to call home: community-led housing and the contest for space

Robert Read
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Abstract

Despite optimistic, yet naïve voices hailing the pandemic as a potential launchpad for a more egalitarian housing future, policy continues to privilege private developers and homeownership, exacerbating house-price inflation and unaffordability. Meanwhile the ‘affordable’ sector struggles to maintain already low build volumes. Caught between these two are people desperate to claim their ‘right to the city’, to find solutions to their own housing crises allowing them to stay in neighbourhoods they call home, rather than being forced out to areas where they have no roots. A fortunate few are helped to do just that by Community Land Trusts (CLT), organisations with origins in mutuality and community organising, attempting to build and provide stewardship of homes that guarantee permanent affordability. My research in London and East Anglia finds the people moving into CLT homes, sold at a price reflecting average local income, are essential to the ‘rhythms’ that gives city life its unique quality. Teachers and health workers, those in the cultural and community sectors or many simply in occupations typical of cities earn salaries that fall below the level that affords them their desired quality of life, in areas severely impacted by often stultifying gentrification. Elsewhere, co-housing schemes are attempting to promote communitarian values of sharing space in ways which produce more cohesive and sustainable communities. Though small in number, these ‘experimental utopias’ offer exemplars of housing which shifts emphasis from ‘exchange’ to ‘use value’, a form, if not of complete ‘appropriation’, then at least a pragmatic ‘co-optation’ of space. Through a multiple case study with Lefebvre’s production of space and right to the city central to its theoretical framework and employing rhythm analysis amongst a suite of qualitative methods, my research seeks to discover the place that community-led forms might play in a more equal and ethical housing future.
Rethinking policymaking and spatial justice in the tourist-historic city

Brendan Paddison, Jenny Hall
York St John University, UK

Abstract

In many historic and post-industrial cities, tourism is often positioned as an important component for urban regeneration. With the promise of jobs, investment and prosperity, the economic imperatives often negate the social, cultural, environmental and ecological harms tourism can bring. Indeed, policymakers and governance processes have concentrated on the growth of tourism over supporting greater social, economic and environmental sustainability (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). Indeed, for those places where tourism has a major economic role, the pandemic has drawn attention to the unsustainable nature of the current industrial, neoliberal models of tourism engagement.

It is within this context that this study explores the spatial in(justice) public policymaking and governance structures have on the ecology of urban tourist destinations and the inequalities this creates. Drawing on Lefebvre’s The Right to the City (1968), we explore how lessons learnt during the pandemic in the tourist-historic city of York, UK could transform tourism futures in historic urban spaces. The hopeful signs emerging from York’s response to the pandemic demonstrate how communities can reclaim voice to build sustainable and purposeful models of engagement in touristic spaces in a (post- )Covid-19 world. We aim to demonstrate the transforming potential this has for future policymaking in tourist-historic cities for reducing the negative impacts of tourism.
The making of a ‘lockdown home’ and what a post-COVID city can learn from it

Olimpia Mosteanu
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Abstract

In this paper, I discuss the rhythms and practices that allowed people to ‘be at home’ and ‘make a home’ at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. I use Lefebvre’s rhythmanalysis concept to explore how a collective notion of a ‘good’ home emerged in the first months of the pandemic in the United Kingdom. The rhythms I explore reveal how individual and community wellbeing came to be further entangled during the first months of the pandemic. The ‘lockdown home’ was a space where the politics and ethics of pandemic restrictions played out.

Rhythmanalysis de-centers the dweller of the ‘lockdown home.’ Instead, it brings attention to the practices and bodies that re-made the home in accord with the new political and ethical landscape. The paper builds on 35 cognitive maps, over 200 photographs and 53 in-depth telephone interviews with participants from a range of geographies and backgrounds across the United Kingdom. It shows how, during the first national lockdown, home was re-spatialised, re-inhabited and re-imagined not as a self-contained space but rather as an entanglement of practices and bodies that stitched dwellers to wider spatial and temporal horizons. While local worlds became geographically smaller, new daily routines re-stabilised the notion of home, helping people re-create spaces of domesticity, intimacy and a newly found sense of responsibility towards a larger ‘home’ that expanded beyond the confines of their homes’ walls.

The in-depth phone interviews, photographs and cognitive maps illustrate how the home extended itself into other spaces, allowing people to inhabit their homes (and lives) differently. The rhythms I discuss allow us to see anew the nested scales of lived experience (home, building, street, neighbourhood) and ask what a post-COVID city can learn from them. These rhythms reveal the material experience of moving through a re-imagined home that was simultaneously smaller and wider than before the pandemic.
Can we grow tufa: a multi-disciplinary approach to the deposition of tufa within a small chalk stream catchment.

Antonia Foley
University of Lincoln, UK

Abstract

Tufa is a calcium carbonate deposit formed in freshwater environments. Understanding tufa deposition is multifaceted and there remains limited local understanding of the tufa deposition rate in Lincolnshire. Consequently, the focus of this work is to explore the physical and chemical factors influencing tufa deposition and monitor its growth. The aim is to quantify the tufa deposition rate at Dunston Beck, Lincolnshire, and the role of flow velocity, flow depth and substrate on deposition rates. These aims will be met by measuring the tufa growth on the 14 sandstone and wooden plates that have been placed along a small reach of Dunston Beck that emulate different hydraulic conditions. The tufa growth will be measured using a handheld 3D scanning device monthly and samples of tufa grown on these plates will be taken and scanned using a Scanning Electron Microscope to categorise morphology and substrate. This is extremely important for classification of tufa as its categories can be caused by varying physical factors including flow rate. The results can be used to inform restoration practices as flow rates and microbial activity have a known relationship with tufa deposition. This work will inform the second phase of the Dunston Beck restoration and inform the Environment Agency with further information for restoring and classifying these sites.
The rhythm of renting: The spatiotemporality of precarity in Winston-Salem, NC

Jack Portman
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Abstract

Using ethnographic data generated between Spring 2020 and Spring 2021, this paper examines the spatiotemporality of housing insecurity, precarity, and social organization in the East Winston neighborhood of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, United States. This research also incorporates historiographical analysis of twentieth century labor and housing politics in Winston-Salem to underscore the linkages between historic public policy and contemporary configurations of race and space. Drawing on Lefebvre's theorization of the production of space and rythmanalysis, this study finds that residential spaces produced and perceived as temporary accommodations are typically not generative of stable social organizations and networks, effectively undermining a valuable means by which low-income residents navigate financial uncertainty. Discordant temporalities such as the rhythm of monthly rent payment and, in a considerably different timescape, waiting and wading through bureaucratic lethargy in order to receive welfare benefits, highlight the interactions between, and mutual productions of, space and time. The rhythm of renting, in particular, shapes the production of social space; the introduction of the unforeseen, vis-a-vis sudden unemployment or other personal or financial crises, produces new rhythms and interrupts existing ones (often, pay-by-the-week motels are used as stopgap housing when a tenant is evicted from their home, illustrating how new rhythms are produced through the interruptions of existing rhythms). Renting syncopates (un)housedness and produces uncertain, precarious sites of living – as well, movement out of East Winston for work, grocery shopping, or socializing is made difficult by traffic rhythms shaped by historical disinvestment in Winston-Salem public transit, as well as the disadvantageous roadway design which cuts East Winston off from the city center, producing sensations among residents of being “stuck” and “forgotten.” By analyzing housing insecurity and precarity via rythmanalysis I bring together space and time in order to examine how social orderings are produced through spatiotemporal processes.
“Stimulating the Affective Economy: Human Geographical Perspectives on Left Behind Places”

Bridget Shaffrey, Anil Sindhwani
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Abstract

Mackinnon et al. (2022), argue in their recently published work that conceptualizations of ‘left behind’ places, as both an empirical concept and theoretical category, are analytically limited despite encapsulating a critical dimension of contemporary spatial inequalities. They continue outlining how existing research on ‘left behind’ places largely ignores the aspirations and needs of local actors and residents. Moreover, they assert that persisting policy frameworks often fail to engage with place-based challenges as well as residents’ notions of attachment and belonging. Responding to Mackinnon’s et al., call to reframe ‘left-behind’ places, this paper considers how researchers might open a dialogue and redefine development for ‘left behind’ places by further exploring the lived realities and experiences of residents within these socio-political conditions (Craig and Richeson, 2017; Muehlebach, 2017). More specifically, our work draws upon geographies of exclusion and contention (McCann, 2019; Sibley, 1995) as well as territorial stigmatization and representation (Sisson 2021; Wacquant et al. 2014), to engage with the affective, emotional, and relational aspects of place-based identity, solidarity, and disenfranchisement in ‘left behind places,” and identify new pathways for research and policy-development. This article addresses the following questions using these theoretical insights from Human and Political geography: How does territorial stigma shape conceptions of left-behind places (and the reverse?); How might (the development of) resident-resident solidarity be structured by stigma?; How might resistance to territorial stigma be understood as a function of, and arising from, political and social solidarity?; How do acts of resistance form in response to/challenge stigma?
Left Behind Places’ and Rural Aspirations under Severe Stress - The Case of Rural Zambia

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Abstract

With this article, we contribute to moving the discussion on ‘left behind’ places beyond its Northern and urban bias (MacKinnon et al., 2021; McCann, 2020). We do so by emphasizing the role of future aspirations and agencies among rural Zambians in dealing with a severe condition of being ‘left behind’. One decade after Zambia’s extractives boom, Zambia’s peripheries are in a state of rural austerity. Enduring food shortage, acute food crises, and insufficient health care circumscribe the livelihoods of many rural Zambians. Especially in Zambia’s Western Province an acute food crisis and little state support since 2019 have put the whole region under severe stress. To conceptualize the future aspirations and agency under this escalation of ‘left behindness’, we apply an affective ‘model of hope’ (Lybbert & Wydick, 2018). The model uses essential elements of hope – aspirations, agency, and pathways – to differentiate how rural Zambians perceive their future even despite their dire situation. We apply this model to survey data from rural households in Zambia’s Western Province. Our results highlight four aspirational outcomes (grit, victimization, aspirational hope, wishful hope). These aspirational outcomes explain fundamentally different pathways chosen among respondents in order to deal with the acute severity of being left behind (waiting & hoping, staying & changing, moving & abandoning). In total, we suggest that an emphasis on variegated aspirations and agencies over the future may explain the emergence of modest ‘development’ pathways that are in sync with the socio-material realities of ‘left behind’ places. These pathways serve to overcome acute crises, but they may also shape rural peripheries in the long run (migration, socio-economic restructuring, neo-endogenous development).
Left behind places in Germany: the hotbeds of political discontent?

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Abstract

In the last decade, there have been signs of political disaffection in the global North such as the Brexit, the rise of AfD in Germany, the election of Donald Trump and similar cases elsewhere in Europe. The regions characterised by larger political discontent are often described as deindustrialized places with high rates of unemployment, deprivation and poverty. Often it is approached from different strands of literature such as peripheralisation, uneven (economic) development and shrinking cities. Many of the regions are often stigmatised and labelled ‘Abgehängte Regionen’ (suspended regions), “structurally weak” or “left-behind”. However, there is a certain fuzziness in these terminologies as these concepts often include a spatial scale and temporal dependencies. Therefore, it is hard to grasp compared to who, what or where people feel left-behind. Studies such as “EU Lagging regions” compare regions with national and European averages often only on one aspect. In the context of peripheries, it is debated that it is all relative in peripheries depending at the scale and timeframe of analysis. However, the question arises if these national or international averages as reference is the comparisons that people experience in their daily life. Therefore, we will approach “left-behindness” at district level in comparison with their neighbouring districts on economic, demographic, social and infrastructural aspects. In this way a more locally indicator of “left-behind” is defined. Additionally, there is a common narrative that links social capital, interpersonal inequality, and long-term economic and demographic decline with political discontent. Therefore, we will see if our approach of “Left-behindness” coincides spatially with protest voting, the rise of populist parties and voter turnout.
Classed symbolic politics and alternative geographies of discontent in the face of urban shrinkage

Solene Le Borgne
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract

This paper is about alternative geographies of discontent, political polarisation, and symbolic policies in French medium-sized shrinking cities. It explores how residents make sense of processes of marginalisation and decline differently based on class and place-based temporal framings, and how the latter influence the construction of symbolic policies. It draws on an extensive body of scholarship on post-industrial communities, which investigates how the economic, social and spatial changes caused by deindustrialisation have led to an in-depth restructuration of the working-class. This field expanded considerably in the context of a political shift toward nationalist and populist votes. Arguing for a broader scope to analyse deindustrialisation, I recontextualise it in the more comprehensive conceptual framework of urban shrinkage, which takes the analysis to different places, urban experiences, and social classes. Then, I connect the scholarship on post-industrial communities to a field of geography and urban studies that seeks to understand how temporal framings are activated in present-day classed politics, in order to transform the city and shape its future. The analysis draws on ethnographic material collected in a French medium-sized shrinking city, Dieppe, which stands as an exception in French geographies of discontent, for its continued far-left political orientation. The findings show that while both working and middle class residents share a common narrative of the “lost grandeur” of Dieppe, the places and economic processes emphasised in this narrative differ depending on class background, eventually leading to different understandings of shrinkage processes. Importantly, these narratives mobilise different geographical scales, economic and political actors. Then, I analyse how local policy makers address specific shrinkage related issues, drawing on working class narratives and imaginaries of place, and scrutinise the polarisation and middle-class discontent arising from such political orientations.
Setting course for the Fourth Industrial Revolution? A case study of the left-behind sea-related industries in the Solent.

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Abstract

The tsunami of new technologies sweeping across regions and economies globally raise profound questions for economic geography in what has been widely described as a Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR). Regions are responding to this transformation with differing degrees of success and economic geographers have identified several sets of factors and conditions that determine the readiness and performance of different regions in the FIR, drawing distinctions between core and lagging regions, and their varied pathways of transformation. However, much of this work has concentrated on regions and areas that are successfully absorbing and responding to FIR transformations. We explore the challenges facing the lagging sea-related industries in the Solent region, drawing on a systems innovation framework, and finding that there are three particular failures inhibiting their development. Firstly, they are struggling with formal institutional failures where the sea-related industries regulators at the national scale have responded slowly to technological change, outcompeted by rival sectors, and failing to recognise the transformative changes necessary for the FIR. Secondly, informal institutional failures are present where public perception of working in British sea-related industries is seen as ‘dull and dirty’, which inhibits young and highly skilled people from pursuing careers in these industries. Thirdly, firms of various sizes and subsectors within the region are failing to identify potential interactions, reducing the spillovers and learning capabilities of the region. The lagging Solent region is indicative of many left-behind coastal and old industrial regions within the UK and abroad. We believe that the three main policy prescriptions for the Solent sea-related industries will have applicability to many lagging sector and region combinations, namely the streamlining of training and technology regulatory environments, the rebranding of sectors aimed at young people to tackle misconceptions, and the facilitation of cross-sector and extra-local relationships.
What is in a meter? Visions of smart metering in India’s electricity future

Dana Abi Ghanem, Tracey Crosbie
Teesside University, UK

Abstract

Smart digital interventions have dominated current approaches for transitioning the energy system towards sustainability (Kloppenburg & Boekelo, 2019). Based on insights from science and technology studies, this paper explores electricity infrastructure dynamics in India through the lens of smart metering to interrogate the promises of the digital for electricity services. These range from local interventions using smart metering devices to longer-term efforts towards smart grids. In our approach, meters are conceptualised as gateway technologies that control access and shape electricity provision (Crosbie, 2009). In the context of the increasing desire for digitalisation of electricity services (Baidya et al., 2021), the uptake of smart metering systems in various parts of the country calls for further examination of what role ‘smartness’ will play in the future of electricity infrastructure for India as it seeks to transition to more sustainable and secure energy. Drawing on qualitative research approach, this paper highlights roles for smart meters that go beyond technical improvements (Kumar, 2019). The promises of the smart meter engage notions of institutional building, financial management and organisational culture. Visions of the digitalisation of infrastructure services carry not only managerial aspects such as redeemable billing and cost recovery, but are laden with idealisation of citizenship and public sector reforms. ‘Smartness’ in this regard is not just a techno-fix but a promise upon which electricity infrastructures can be governed. These visions are discussed in light of the shifting landscape of energy from commodity to service, and concerns regarding access and implications for poor and marginalised groups.
Unpacking autonomy to rethink local development

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Abstract

Place-based development adds a strategic dimension (Madanipour et al, 2021) to the way European regional policy is conceived. It injunctions the local to act for its own development, suggesting building upon a subtle dialogue between external and internal expertise (Barca, 2019). In parallel, for more than 20 years, decentralisation has increased responsibilities and room for manoeuvre at the local level EU-wide (except for Hungary, Ladner et al., 2016). How do the most vulnerable regions (also labelled “left behind”) take up these increased accountability and capacities for driving a development that works for them? To what extent do their financial, legal and organisational capacities enable them to initiate development in line with local aspirations and potentials? This contribution aims at providing conceptual thoughts and empirical evidence to critically reflect on whether and how autonomy can be instrumental for localities to thrive. This paper uses decolonial thinking and spatial justice to conceptualise the notions of development and autonomy. This paper is empirically informed by a selection of 4 qualitatively run case studies analyses spread in the EU and facing structural development challenges (post-industrial, peripheral, border, rural) collected from the H2020 RELOCAL project (2016-2021). By taking a critical look at the opportunities and limits of local autonomy, this analysis identifies institutional and participative responses allowing to build a more spatially just local development. The analysis demonstrates that anchoring development into local knowledge is a necessary step to build participation, accountability and development that works for the locality.
Spatial imaginaries and strategic spatial planning as effective tools for marginalised territories: a case study in Piedmont (Italy)

Mauro Fontana, Loris A Servillo
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Abstract

The crisis of the urban centrality and the rethinking of the relationships between centres and peripheries are playing an important role for the development pathways and prospects for ‘left-behind territories’ in Italy. In fact, since 2014, when the ‘National Strategy for Inner Areas’ (SNAI) policy was launched, the issues of ‘inner areas’ have been prominent. As a place-based policy, SNAI has developed new modalities of multi-level local governance and a strategic approach aimed at addressing demographic challenges, triggering local development processes, and improving welfare services. Spatial disparities therefore indicate the emerging challenge to rethink the spatial dimension of the welfare systems. This perspective implies the policy urgency of overturning the way of looking at territories, to imagine them as places in which to launch and consolidate renewed forms of living, (also) through new forms of ‘foundational economy’. The paper aims to discuss the role of strategic spatial planning to revitalise marginalised territories. To this purpose, the concepts of spatial imaginary and strategic spatial planning allows to combine the identified space of cooperation, its policy mandate, and the governance articulation. Spatial imaginaries show the need to reflect on regenerative actions with a strong territorial, and thus necessarily integrated, perspective. Focusing on the case study of the south-western Alps in Piedmont, the paper analyses two different type of strategic approach and their distinctive experiences in terms of governance and policy. Specifically, the contribute analyses on the one hand how SNAI is (or is not) operating within one of the pilot areas (Maira and Grana Valleys), and on the other hand the strategic initiatives of area of spontaneous territorial cooperation (Saluzzese area) and its spatial imaginaries. The construction of spatial imaginaries is also anchored to a dense reading of the territory capable of making transformation scenarios an effective strategic territorial project aimed at overcoming disparities and marginalization.
Asymmetric devolution and the critical path of Combined Authorities and Metro Mayors - is this the ‘real deal’ for left behind places in England?

Paul M Greenhalgh, Kevin Muldoon-Smith
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Abstract

The question, of how best to configure sub-national economic development within England remains contested and unresolved since the Coalition Government’s dismantling of the regional tier in favour of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), City Deals, Combined Authorities and Metro Mayors. The deal-making process has been ad-hoc, incremental and sporadic, with 8 new English Combined Authorities with elected ‘Metro Mayors’ being agreed between 2014 and 2018 and West Yorkshire being added in 2020. A characteristic of emerging sub-regional arrangements in England is the rejection of a ‘one size fits all’ model in favour of an asymmetric approach to devolution. More recently, the English Government’s recent Levelling Up White Paper proposes a ‘mission-led’ approach to empower local decision making and encourage pan-regional partnerships and spatial consideration in geographic allocation of funding. Our research focusses on the evolution of sub-national governance in northern metropolitan areas that may be characterized as lagging, or left behind, compared to other metropolitan areas in England. The research explores the ‘critical path’ of deals and agreements that have emerged through a fluid and sometimes dynamic process where different permutations of powers, responsibilities and privileges have been agreed with different arrangements of local councils at different spatial scales. Our analysis charts the different paths and tempo that ‘left behind’ towns and cities have followed, to reveal some of the underlying socio-political, economic, and financial circumstances that have influenced the pathways to ‘real deals’, ‘raw deals’ or ‘no deal’ outcomes.
Empowering ‘left behind places’? Lessons from the Dutch ‘Region Deal’-programme

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Abstract

The starting point of this paper is to assess governance and policy to address the issues of ‘left behind places’, from the normative ideal of empowerment, drawing on the work of John Friedmann in particular (Friedmann, 1992). The empirical basis is provided by the ‘Region Deal’-programme in The Netherlands. This programme started in 2018 and constitutes the latest round of regional development policy. It features two key shifts in comparison to previous iterations of regional policy in The Netherlands: (1) a shift from promoting economic prosperity (in a narrow sense) to promoting well-being (in a broad sense); and (2) a shift from centralized policy-making to (more) place-based policy-making. These two shifts offer potential for the economic and political empowerment of ‘left-behind places’. Based on in-depth case studies of a representative sample of 4 Region Deals, I consider the extent to which, and the ways in which, this potential has been realised in the programme. From this analysis I then draw a number of more general lessons for policy design and governance organisation to support the empowerment of ‘left behind’ communities and people.
Post covid lockdown walks with a mobile diary in Santiago de Chile

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the dynamics of walking. The lockdown on going out re-signified walking in everyday life. Once the confinement ended, the NGO “La Reconquista Peatonal” invited people in Chile to walk and use the Diario-Móvil (Mobile-Diary), a tool for recording experiences as a personal diary. From different cities and characteristics, sixty people wrote, drew, used diagrams, etc., to record what it was like to walk in public space again.

The results show two approaches. The first is about the Mobile-Diary, a deliberate tool, capable of inciting reflection. The second focuses on the stories of women, whose main axes of reflection are care work, urban infrastructure and the body. Both approaches show how walking reflects spatial and social themes, transcending individual concerns. It is proposed to discuss what walking means today and how the daily reflections of those who walk can contribute to the construction of collective knowledge.
"Unaccompanied", “refugee”, “children”: a socio-ecological exploration of resilience in inner-city Johannesburg

Sinoyolo Godongwana
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Abstract

Migration is not a new phenomenon for children and adults in many regions. However, the world is witnessing an ever-increasing movement of children across the globe. Hopes of better livelihoods, educational opportunities, the surge in prolonged crises and exposure to adversities are pushing ever more significant numbers of children to leave their homes. Enroute and upon arrival in host destinations, these children experience a number of adversities.

This paper focuses on unaccompanied refugee children in an urban environment. It seeks to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon by exploring—first—the concept of childhood and—second—the experiences that unaccompanied refugee children are confronted with enroute to and while navigating their daily lives in Johannesburg's inner-city. In so doing, it aims to challenge the universal notion that children are humans that are yet to become. By exploring child agency, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of children as active agents of their journeys. The fundamental contention I make is that there is a need to go beyond simply appreciating children as social actors in an attempt to unearth the contexts in which their everyday agency unfolds. It is also vital to inquire about the type of agency that these children have, how they obtain and utilise it and how their agency connects them to their resilience.
Reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic using public, web-based data dashboards: A reflection on the geographical communication component from a health system and service research perspective

Damir Ivanković, Erica Barbazza
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract

Dashboards are a digital tool for reporting data visually, intended to quickly and effectively present critical information to act upon. Following established use in the corporate sector, dashboards have gained momentum in health care, primarily for organizational management and system performance assessment. In 2020, COVID-19 dashboards were rapidly launched worldwide to communicate pandemic-related information to the public, health authorities and governments. The speed and uniformity of embracing dashboards as a reporting and decision-making tool worldwide was unprecedented. Reporting on an infectious disease required local monitoring, reporting and decision-making, and most dashboards employed geographical communication, including regional, city or post code-level drill-downs.

Our global team of health system and service researchers studied this phenomenon during 2020 and 2021. We looked at: what made COVID-19 dashboards actionable, on a global sample of 158 dashboards from 53 countries; how dashboards changed over time, on examples in Canada and the Netherlands; and how could the development of COVID-19 dashboards be described from the perspective of their developers, on a sample of 33 WHO European Region countries. We: identified seven features common to actionable dashboards worldwide; mapped areas of improvement; and documented common barriers, enablers and lessons derived from experiences of dashboard developers.

Our research provides interesting insights on geographical communication approaches, methods, and tools used. The geographic component dashboard reporting has somewhat improved over time. However, geographers and/or geospatial data scientists were rarely part of dashboard teams. Concerns over protecting privacy using local “drill-downs” were common. The use of modelling and novel analytical and/or reporting approaches was very scarce. The appreciation for dashboard-based geospatial data-supported reporting has grown substantially among the public as well as policy decision-makers. Dashboards seem to be “here to stay”, which presents a window of opportunity to improve how geographical communication is done with tools such as dashboards.
COAL AND A GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IN NORTH-EAST POLAND.

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Abstract

This proposal is based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in the village of Chruściel in North-East Poland, near the border with Russia, and home to a cargo reloading base owned by a Polish coal-importing company. In recent years local residents have formed a pressure group that draws attention to the environmental damage and pollution caused by the company and its operations, such as high levels of dust associated with coal processing. The group has engaged local authorities in its efforts to impose restrictions on the company’s activities on the reloading base to minimise its negative impact on the community and local environment. In this way a company that employs local residents and claims to support the community through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, is at the same time targeted as an undesirable nuisance, highlighting moral dilemmas and conflicting perceptions of coal held by the local community and the company. Local knowledge, experiences and expectations often clash with goals of CSR projects which are imposed from above by executives who want to project a specific vision of social engagement (Skrzypek 2020). Studying a small village community and its relationship with coal aims to evaluate this suggestion by asking how a vision of economic development, social equity and environmental protection is implemented through local companies as sustainability rhetoric, how it is understood by the local community, and whether it advances or controls industrial capitalism, and thus human impact on the environment.
Spaces of urban recovery and the publicness of social infrastructure: the Gradual Plan Towards the New Normal in Mexico City

Andres Sierra Martinez
The University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

In cities of the Global South, initiatives and policies of recovery and response to the Covid-19 pandemic intersect with the practices and arrangements that make collective life possible (Bhan, Caldeira, Gillespie & Simone, 2020). In Mexico City, these policies include efforts to modify spaces such as sidewalks, streets, workplaces, or parks. Such strategies for urban recovery impact and rely on the provision of social infrastructures as sites for interpersonal connection where different experiences of publicness take place (Klinenberg, 2018; Latham & Layton, 2019). This paper analyses the role of social infrastructure in the local government response to the pandemic in Mexico City, examining experiences of publicness and collective life.

Spatial data related to a case study on the exposure to the pandemic in the city complement a documentary analysis of the “Gradual Plan Towards the New Normal in Mexico City” (G-CDMX, 2020): a policy with practical guidelines on the disposition of public spaces implemented by the local government in May of 2020. It examines media and government reports related to disputes around neighbourhood everyday places derived from this plan to claim that prioritising commerce and transit spaces produced a fragile experience of publicness in social infrastructure. It further argues that this fragility of publicness relates to the context of social infrastructure provision, political participation, and planning in Latin American cities (Zeiderman, 2016; Anguelovski et al., 2019).

References


Risky Cities: using flood histories to build community climate resilience for the future

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Abstract

In Autumn 2021 the city of Hull hosted the FloodLights event which used the city’s heritage and history of flooding to devise site-specific sound and light installations. Based on data collected from the audience for this event, this paper explores arts-based climate change interventions and the ways in which climate art can achieve effective public engagement. Each of the installations were intimately related to the city’s historic relationship to water, utilizing specific place-based perspectives to connect parts of the city with contemporary narratives of climate change, flooding, and sea level rise. The paper analyses audience questionnaire responses to each of these artworks and unravels the way in which historically informed site-specific public art can develop public understanding of climate related flooding and promote positive climate action. This includes an exploration of the emotional and affective implications of the installations and the role they play in shaping audience emotions to climate related issues. In doing so it highlights the tension between public appreciation of arts installations in public spaces and the need for funders to achieve ‘success’ in project delivery. This paper considers this approach both as a success story and as an illustration of the challenges presented by co-opting public spaces for the broadcasting of dominant narratives of risk, hazard, and environmental change.
An investigation and exploration of the practice of social prescribing in a rural environment

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Abstract

Social prescribing (SP) has rapidly expanded over recent years. Previously a bottom-up, community-led phenomenon, SP is now a formal part of structured NHS policy and practice. This research forms part of a PhD research project which is investigating the practice of the novel NHS model of SP within a predominately rural clinical commissioning group (CCG) in the UK. The research comprises three phases of data collection, each informed by the previous phase. These include a survey of referring healthcare professionals within primary care, interviews with practicing social prescribers, and interviews with a selection of rural service users of SP. Qualitative methods were employed throughout in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of the participants and identify challenges and facilitators of successful SP practice. The first two phases were carried out non-discriminatory of level of rurality so that both rural and urban perspectives could be examined, and any differences between them identified. The investigation included questioning referrers and social prescribers about their ideas of rurality and deprivation and how these affected their practice and the engagement of service users. Preliminary results indicate a large discrepancy of practice and understanding of SP within this CCG, indicating non-adherence to a top-down NHS model. The most common perception of rurality held by professionals is that of a wealthy, elderly, rural cohort and more deprived, younger, urban dwellers. Pockets of rural deprivation were acknowledged to exist, though reports of these were minimal and professionals lacked experience of engaging with them.
The Slow Food Movement and the Terra Madre Project: food sovereignty and translocal assemblages’

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Abstract

Slow Food is a social movement founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions. Present in over 160 countries, Slow Food’s projects relate to food sovereignty, food security and food identity. Since 2004 the Slow Food Movement has developed an international project called Terra Madre. Terra Madre is a global community of food producers and activists linked through methodological, theoretical, and material exchanges. My research aims to study several strands of the Terra Madre project as translocal assemblages, analysing the work and exchange between members of the community as a form of translocal activism on food production. The research also considers to what extent Slow Food can be defined as a movement for food sovereignty, focusing on interpretations of horizontal democracy and agroecology. Ultimately, the study seeks to reflect on the complex role that social movements play in sustaining rural areas in Europe, thus developing what scholars have defined as alternative global countryside. The presentation draws on data collection on two international meetings of the Terra Madre project and research with participants involving semi-structured interviews as well as field visits to communities of food producers in Italy and the UK. The presentation reflects on the experience of digital and in person fieldwork and how the study of Terra Madre provides insights into Slow Food as a translocal movement characterized by conflicts, common perspectives, and emergent capabilities.
Strengthening rural resilience via empowerment of local stakeholders and landowners in the Czech Republic

Ondřej Konečný
Mendel University, Czechia

Abstract

Based on research among three types of stakeholders (landowners - questionary survey; representatives of villages - semistructured interviews; farmers - focus group) we assess in particular the perception and possibilities of municipal governments in strengthening the resilience of rural areas to ongoing climate change and in especial to progressive drought. The paper seeks to show that actors have a range of options within the framework of mutual communication to take co-responsibility for addressing the causes or implementing preventive measures to strengthen rural adaptation to ongoing changes at the local level.
Modern Slavery in the Agriculture Industry

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Abstract

Modern Slavery is a significant problem within the agricultural industry. This phenomenon is hard to quantify and study due to its illegal nature. This problem has likely been exacerbated in Europe over the past two decades by a supply chain increasingly controlled by a few large stakeholders and the presence of organised crime. Current studies of modern slavery and human trafficking have overwhelmingly focused on sexual exploitation. A survey was conducted in order to better ascertain the public knowledge of the presence of modern slavery within the UK in general, and within agriculture specifically. Although most respondents agreed that modern slavery was present in the UK, only 50% thought that it was present rurally or in agriculture. Although the sample size was small and not representative of the UK population, it aligns with trends in the media and academia in assuming that victims are primarily migrant or trafficked women. Studies or reports about forced labour in the agricultural supply chain are rarer. Studying this phenomenon and acquiring quantitative data would better allow us to create effective policies to restructure supply chains in ways that combat vulnerabilities for both workers and growers.
Rural childhoods- time-spatial organisation of families everyday life in remote rural settings of Sweden

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Abstract

In my dissertation research project, I study the everyday life of families with children in relation to their housing setting in remote rural places of Sweden. Changes and challenges of living in rural settings, including trends of counterurbanisation due to Covid-19 pandemic and rapidly increasing fuel prices, impacts the organisation and negotiation of everyday life for families in rural spaces.

In this paper, I discuss some preliminary results from my dissertation project on how families in remote rural settings in Sweden ‘do family’ in relation to the time-spatial organisation and negotiation of everyday practices including children’s mobility in and between different socio-spatial contexts. Focusing on how social networks, materialities and policy interact with the organisation of children’s everyday lives I draw on the relational turn in rural studies about increased recognition of the interwoven and co-constitutive construction of rural spatiality through material and discursive phenomena, processes and practices (Heley et al., 2012).

Drawing on theories of ‘doing family’ and of mobility as relational, interdependent and assembled, I view family as an everyday accomplishment of all its members, and families’ and children’s mobility practices as ‘produced and distributed through relational arrangements’ (Nansen et al. 2015:469). This conceptualisation of the doing of family in relation to mobility practices shifts focus from the individual and starts from an interdependent (human as well as non-human) context.
Are rural communities immune to flooding? An assessment of the interplay between rural communities and flood events in a world dominated by urban flood study.

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Abstract

Rural communities have long been required to endure the consequences of flooding with Thorne (2014) suggesting rural areas have been sacrificed under the concept of sustainable/natural flood management to protect populous settlements. Past research of rural flood risk has overwhelmingly aligned to physical geography disciplines such as hydrology and structural flood management. However, human societies are the very purpose we wish to manage risks associated with flood events, yet as we advance towards an increasingly non-structural approach to Flood Risk Management (FRM), the human populations which were once the recipient of FRM are increasingly becoming the enactors in line with the co-responsibility concept of sustainable FRM (Kuhlicke et al., 2020). Alarmingly, this “social” line of research is limited in the rural context thus, validating its need.

Vulnerability is argued to be the most important factor we must consider in any natural hazard, defined broadly as potential for loss, yet owing to a sparsity in past research we are to a great extent unaware of the degree to which vulnerability to flood events is an issue amongst the rural populous and how it is governed. Furthermore, this raises questions surrounding the extent of rural protection and the aptitude of rural residents to protect themselves from flooding.

This paper outlines the beginnings of a programme of PhD research that seeks to examine the aforementioned factors amongst rural communities of the River Severn catchment utilising a pragmatistic, mixed-method approach, with the intention of strengthening our knowledge regarding the societal aspects of rural flooding.
Belonging to the Countryside: rural place attachment and long-term stayers in the Clogher Valley

Jonathan Hanna
Queen's University Belfast, UK

Abstract

Rural residents who chose to stay in place are often seen as a residual category within mobility research. These immobile populations deserve greater focus as staying is often part of an active process (Coulter et al 2016). Place Attachment, defined as the emotional bond or link between people, is highlighted as an important factor influencing decisions to stay (Looker & Naylor 2010, Stockdale et al 2018). The majority of research on place attachment has focused on urban residential environments with a lack of focus on rural areas (Lewicka 2011). Previous studies have shown that people can become attached to different scales and landscapes for different reasons (Hidalgo & Hernandez 2001).

A statistical analysis of questionnaire data collected will provide an insight into what factors are important for attachment within rural areas. Focusing on the South Tyrone region (Northern Ireland) of the STAYin(g) Rural project, findings from the development of a place attachment index will be presented, profiling those rural stayers residing in settlements and single dwellings in the open countryside have a high level of attachment. This research contends that stayers have diverse forms of attachment which is explored further through thematic analysis of interviews. Focusing on stayers this research will give greater knowledge and understanding of the role place attachment plays within “immobile” populations.
Will rural newcomers become stayers?

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 period, rural areas in Western Europe seem to have attracted some flows of newcomers, in search for healthy and spacious residential environments in the rural idyll. An often heard explanation for this is the fact that working online from home has become more widely accepted, after the experiences with this during the COVID-19 lock downs. For some rural areas, these new in-migrants may be a welcome counterforce for their ageing, stagnating or declining populations. Provided that they will stay, at least for a while. This paper aims to give some background to who these newcomers are, and whether it can be predicted if they will stay in the rural for the short or longer term. We will do this by using secondary data, and survey and interview data gathered in the context of the STAYin(G)Rural project, in Northern-Ireland, Germany and The Netherlands. We will include the life course perspective, residential history and daily life mobility in our analyses.
Abstract

Biography of a Sound is about the music Prince made famous—the Minneapolis Sound, a musical geography that tells the story of how Indian removal, white settlement, mass migration, industrialization, music education, racism, and a genius kid born and raised in the city’s small Black community gave rise to a form of transgressive popular music that put the “vanilla city” of Minneapolis on the map. For over four decades Prince dazzled us with his unique combination of rock, funk, R&B, jazz, and new wave. His musical range was unparalleled; his talent was otherworldly; and his drive was legendary. He was a one-man band who wrote, arranged, composed, performed most of the music on his 44 studio albums, influenced generations of musicians, and mentored musicians like Janelle Monae, Lizzo, and Alicia Keys. He single-handedly changed the face of popular music and became one of the greatest and most prolific artists we’ve ever seen.

Left out of conversations about Prince is his hometown Minneapolis. This presentation connects Prince and his sound to Minneapolis. From it's settler-colonial origins, to innovative music training in public schools, to its racially segregated music scene, this presentation places place at the center of Prince's music and show's that his sound was grounded in geography.
In Pursuit of Paradise: Re-popularising Rural Idyll in the Light of COVID-19

Rana Dadpour
James Cook University, Australia

Abstract

The return to basics at the times of crises is a phenomenon rooted in the historic perception of rural as refuge. In the light of COVID-19 metropolitan areas have been identified with high density and overcrowding while regional and rural localities have been re-populated as sanctuaries away from the pandemic to re-connect to the nature. Cairns as a tropical place far from capital cities and surrounded by rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef, has the perfect image of such sanctuary. However, this image undermines the fact that Cairns is a cosmopolitan urban city suffering from several capital cities’ liveability issues. Little research has been done to analyse the nature and impacts of such inconsistencies between expected and perceived liveability among newcomers in non-metropolitan areas. Drawing on the concepts of amenity migration and liveability, this paper addresses this gap and reports on the preliminarily findings of 35 narrative interviews with recent migrants to Cairns. Applying a social constructivism lens, this paper discusses the liveability of Cairns from newcomers’ perspective, the aftermaths of a prominent contrast between expected and perceived liveability, and possible strategies to address such disparities.
New Colonization Roads: Present-Day Strategies to ‘Open up’ North Hastings County, Ontario to New Rounds of In-Migration and Investment

William Bedford
York University, Toronto, Canada

Abstract

In the mid-19th Century, colonization roads facilitated the settlement of Hastings County’s remote, rocky north by connecting it with urbanizing immigration centres along Lake Ontario’s shores. In presenting a relatively inhospitable area as a land of agricultural opportunity, the accompanying round of boosterist ‘place-marketing’ from colonial authorities amounted to something of a false promise. Since then, the area has been home to mining booms and busts, a once-strong but steadily-declining forestry sector and a growing rural recreation economy. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has initiated potentially profound shifts in North Hastings’ society and economy, as an historically liminal area is experiencing an unprecedented wave of in-migration.

This paper focusses on the relationship between this wave of in-migration - alongside associated new economic activities - and the strategic-planning and place-marketing initiatives of local governmental agencies. With attention to the context of North Hastings’ turbulent economic history, interview data and document reviews of published plans and reports are used to understand the present-day production of ‘conceived space’ (Lefebvre 1991, Halfacree 2007) in North Hastings. While exploring ‘official’ attempts to (re)shape place identities, an analysis is put forward of how these identities are received and contested by residents, inhabiting the ‘lived spaces’ of their everyday lifeworld. The paper also asks: have local governmental agencies interventions meaningfully transformed local socio-economic conditions or can changes be attributed to more general transformations of rural space in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic?


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New life in the country: Covid-related migration in Scotland

Ruth Wilson, Christina Noble, Margaret Currie
James Hutton Institute, UK

Abstract

While the Covid-19 pandemic has brought many challenges for rural and island communities, it has also presented opportunities. Not least, it has prompted people to re-evaluate their life priorities, leading many to seek fundamental changes in how and where they live and work. Aided by new cultures of remote working, this is resulting in a well-documented “rush to the countryside”, a trend that has potential to redress longstanding challenges of population decline like never before, securing sustainable futures for vulnerable communities.

Drawing on in-depth, qualitative interviews with 30 rural stakeholders conducted in the summer of 2020, and follow-up interviews with eight stakeholders in February 2022, this paper problematises positive narratives concerning Covid-related rural migration in Scotland. Initial optimism about the potential for demographic and economic regeneration is giving way to realities of exacerbated land and housing crises, questions about the value of remote workers to local economies, and concerns that migration may not be happening where it is needed most. As we transition towards recovery, it is important that these emerging realities are understood and acted upon for the good of rural and island communities.

Informed by the literature of rural mobilities and the rural idyll, we suggest that this trend is fuelled by discordance between the imagined futures sought by “lifestyle migrants” to the countryside and the needs of rural communities. The paper concludes with reflections on how the new demand for rural lifestyles might be harnessed to maximise the benefits for rural communities while minimising the potential disbenefits.
Policy integration challenges for climate-connected EU cities: lessons from urban mobility in Dutch cities

Carlo Colombo, Marc Dijk
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Abstract

Urban policy integration is generally proposed as a solution for promoting sustainability problems in cities, as it allows coordinated and coherent solutions across interdependent actors and sectors. However, this quest for integration is problematic since local solutions are influenced by a multitude of instruments and procedures designed by higher levels of government.

This article takes a multi-level governance perspective to provide a critical reflection on the capacity of cities to adapt urban agendas under pressure of climate change concerns. It does so by addressing the question: ‘How can policies at multiple governance levels in the EU be better integrated, to enable more effective urban, climate-connected governance?’. Drawing on earlier work on policy integration as a process to govern today’s wicked problems, the article analyses how three key dimension of policy integration, policy frames, instruments, and organizational procedures, at multiple governance levels are evolving under the pressure of climate change concerns, offering implications and directions for more effective, climate-connected, urban governance. Accordingly, it aims to advance scholarship on urban climate action and the role of cities in EU climate governance.

To achieve more specific insights, we empirically examine one particular field, urban mobility, in The Netherlands. Urban mobility is a key contributor to carbon emissions, yet still an understudied policy issue for cities and the EU as a whole. Albeit perceived as pioneers in climate action and urban planning and increasingly empowered, Dutch cities remarkably still suffer from urgent mobility-related problems, just like most other EU cities.

Using an original dataset of 31 interviews on how Dutch cities try to address the problem of promoting sustainable urban mobility, we show how the lack of understanding of the interdependent nature of this problem at different institutional levels can hinder the capacity to promote sustainable solutions in urban areas.
Cycling safety and inequalities in Bogotá, Colombia

Camilo Torres Barragán
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Abstract

The positive impacts of sustained global growth in cycling as a mode of transport to the environment, health, and traffic are widely recognised and supported by research (Handy et al., 2014); however it has often been accompanied by an increase in traffic accidents and deaths involving cyclists (Loreta et al., 2016). Most of the research and its recommendations to reduce cycling crashes seem to rely primarily on individual behavioural changes or segregating infrastructure. However, the positive impacts of such actions are not the expected, as cycle accidents continue to rise in many countries (Shinar et al., 2018). While these actions are certainly necessary, recent approaches propose that more collective and long-standing changes in policy, education and law can be even more beneficial (Marqués and Hernández-Herrador, 2017). Correspondingly, research considering social, spatial and economic disparities and their relation to urban cycling is very scarce within cycling studies and have the potential to benefit cycling safety by expanding its underlying understanding (Brown, 2016). This study proposes that understanding and improving cycling safety can benefit from perspectives of the ‘right to the city’, which expands related considerations to include cities, participation and the production of space from a collective and socioeconomic point of view (Purcell, 2014). Additionally, there is a clear disproportion between the research about cycling safety in the Global North and the Global South – in particular, Latin America. While debates around transport and the right to the city are prevalent in Latin American cities, not enough attention has been paid to cycling. By analysing the case of Bogotá, deemed as an example in cycling policy despite having high levels of cyclists’ deaths, this research aims to develop a better understanding of the collective and socioeconomic aspects of cycling safety, while using a combination of archival review, interviews, focus groups and spatial analysis.
Shrouded Cartographies of Subordination: How Science Fiction Stories Build Anti-Black Futures

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Abstract

Some say that science fiction becomes science. If science fiction eventually becomes science and technology, then US-American science and technology surrounding robots are rooted in white supremacy. Scholarship has previously highlighted the way that films and stories about robots are exclusionary towards Black people and persons of color. These texts, while aptly making the connection between race, Blackness, and technology, do not sufficiently address the embedded design of anti-Blackness in cultural artifacts in the early twentieth century and the anti-Black logics that, to this day, continue to inform how stories about robots are told. Further, these analyses do not consider the connection between cultural artifacts and the material development of emerging technologies; how these embedded racist narratives drive and shape how the technologies are then constructed.

In this project, I aim to link how anti-Black scientific popular culture has informed academic scholarship and engineering related to how robots are conceptualized in the United States. Stories are an inherently spatial project. Stories about robots are a spatial project intended to create “Cartographies of Subordination.” I contend from 1922 to 1942, US-American robots were mapped into and onto the world; in just twenty short years, I argue a Cartography of Subordination was established. I apply a spatial lens to critique the impact of embedding stories about robots with anti-Blackness. These stories would develop into narratives with material consequences and maintain lasting ties and allegiance to a world invested in white supremacy. I outline how popular culture and stories are transfigured into narratives that have a direct impact on how futures are built. I expose the loop between popular culture and scholarship to unmask how research and development in robotics are based on white-informed futures.
“An Armenian crosses a border”: Transnational disasters and the failure of terms of art

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Abstract

In 2020, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, “frozen” for the previous twenty-five years in an unsteady ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia, flared up again with brutal abandon. For forty-four days the war over control of the separatist region raged on, resulting in an estimated two thirds of the population in Nagorno-Karabakh leaving the region at the peak of violence. In the face of such proportionally massive displacement, the international humanitarian aid apparatus was enacted on either side of the contested area: in Armenia and Azerbaijan. In a humanitarian landscape where still-aggrieved governments act as gate-keepers for humanitarian access, choosing a unified discursive space in which to operate has serious implications for humanitarian action.

Building on both academic fieldwork and professional experience from the aid sector, this paper delves into the troubled language of aid, brought into the fore during the Nagorno-Karabakh war response. The case study shows a political landscape where even the most basic description of the beneficiary population has international consequences for how the humanitarian intervention can operate. Using the problematic specificity of the term “refugee” as a starting point, the paper will cover the layered jurisdictions at play across borders—hard and soft—in displacement crises of an international humanitarian scale. The paper will close with a meditation on the future of aid to displaced populations in a world of increasingly complex, violent borders.
The Limits of Interdisciplinarity in the Anthropocene: Science, Synthesis and Epistemic Abandonment in the Florida Everglades

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Abstract

The Anthropocene heralds both environmental and epistemic crises. Anglo-American scientific communities have responded with calls for interdisciplinary research that synthesizes human and natural sciences to create innovative solutions to ‘grand challenges’ and ‘wicked problems’ of planetary change. While geographers have critiqued the ethical and epistemological effects of these models of interdisciplinarity, less attention has been paid to the distinct and potentially incompatible visions and practices of nature. This paper explores this topic through a case study of interdisciplinary science on Everglades restoration. We situate the trajectory of interdisciplinary Everglades research in relation to shifting politics surrounding cybernetic, informationalized “third nature.” Since the 1960s, transdisciplinary environmental science has supported conversationists in struggles with developers and farmers over the produced/second nature of the built environment. However, there is an emerging split within capital, as global finance and reinsurers, increasingly concerned that climate change impacts could make the region uninhabitable, approach the Everglades as critical urban infrastructure that prevents saltwater intrusion into the region’s drinking water supply. This is creating new alliances between environmental science and financial capital, in which ecological, biological, and biochemical knowledge on the ‘first nature’ of the Everglades ecosystem becomes infromationalized and enrolled into ‘third nature’ models of future investment risks. Conservation, in turn, is becoming increasingly transvalued as a means of securing current and future real estate investments and warding off future socio-ecological systemic collapse. The result is a perilously thin model of interdisciplinarity that potentially undermines the ability of interdisciplinary science to contest ongoing environmental destruction.
‘Watering down’ sustainability: infrastructure, politics and connected transitions in Cypriot tourism sector

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Abstract

The basic tenet of the Deep Transition framework is that separate historical technological revolutions share a single directionality. They shared an underlying principle of a “relentless emphasis on productivity growth” based on an understanding of abundant natural resources. As an outcome of this alignment, persistent societal problems emerged, or existing ones worsened, which are now deeply entrenched in current modes of (mass) production, distribution and consumption (Schot and Kanger, 2018). Tourism and water supply industries in the Cyprus context is a privileged case for highlighting ‘connected transitions’ (van der Vleuten, 2019). The paper focuses on the recent history of water supply infrastructure and its entwinement with the tourism regime’s development from 1974 to the present day. Adopting a long-term perspective, the study focuses in particular on how tourism regime, as in development policies, visions and infrastructures, was co-shaped by the water supply system. Thus, I aim to show that in Cyprus the water supply infrastructure itself became a material rule for the tourism regime stabilising it on a high-water demand path. Water infrastructure’s design, I argue, inscribes materially one of the main rules that dominate the tourism regime: water supply can be infinitely increased and readily available. I will examine water supply as a “socio-technical system” embodying expertise, social practices, infrastructure and political interests. In sociotechnical systems analysis, infrastructures are not treated as technical artefacts but are considered parts of a system which includes geographical, institutional and social components (Van der Vleuten, 2004). This paper will study privileged actors such as state-agents (Carroll, 2012) as in Water Development Department, Cyprus Tourism Organisation, politicians and bureaucrats; industrial associations; local and international experts. The paper unfolds in five periods which represent distinct patterns of tourism and water politics relation between 1960-2020. The article is based on archival material from the State Archives (Nicosia), Water Development Department, Deputy Ministry of Tourism (ex-Cyprus Tourism Organisation), Press Office of the Republic of Cyprus.
Travelling with glitches in a platform-mediated city

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Abstract

This research maps the digital geographies of travelling with mobile apps, drawing on the posthuman approach that emphasises the embeddedness of humanity in the practices with digital technologies. Specifically, this research draws on ‘glitch politics’ – a concept built upon a feminist speculative epistemology – of platform-city interactions to understand urban practices of walking, driving, and ride-hailing in Guangzhou, a megacity in south China. Feminist digital geographies understand the subjectivities in the digital society as assemblages of both human and nonhuman actors, highlight the situated positionality, reflexivity and ethics of digital subjects, and concern an ethic of ‘staying with trouble’. Following these ideas, this research focuses on how people use map apps on an everyday basis. The key findings of this article have empirically developed Lezczyński’s (2020) and Elwood’s (2021) glitchy theory of platform/city interface by considering the glitchy margins registered to platform urbanism as social practices and offered a minor politics that reframe and regenerate daily routines emotionally and playfully through everyday tactics aiming at correcting glitches of digital platforms. Throughout this research, I seek to understand the relations between human and the technological non-human agencies and their role in the everyday making of urban life. The technological non-human agencies, in this research, generate the ecology of breakdowns that embedded in the practice and process of making/unmaking glitches and human subjectivities. Thus, the posthuman understanding of digital practices is more than a thinking about the co-constitution and co-evolution of human and the technological non-human. Instead, we must investigate the disruptions, ignorance and contingencies engaged in the ongoing interactions between human and the digital.
Local Peace narratives of Climate Affected Communities in Lake Chad Basin, Cameroon for a decolonial peace education

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Abstract

This research investigates peace education in Cameroon – through the experiences of displaced people from Cameroon’s Lake Chad Basin region due to several challenges, including terrorism, underdeveloped state presence, food insecurity, migration, climate change, and its environmental implications – to inform the current educational landscape and in particular the content and delivery of peace education. The inhabitants of the region have long depended on the lake for fishing and food cultivation and the lake shrinkage and desertification (resulting from the southward extension of the Sahara Desert) directly impacted human security (health, food, employment, diseases, and education). Therefore, thousands of people have migrated to other regions of Cameroon in search of a better livelihood. We use several storytelling sessions in small groups in collaboration with local artists and NGOs and in different settings enriched by the local heritage practices of songs, music, and dances to capture intersecting issues that threaten the human security of the displaced communities, local values, knowledge, and narratives of peace, peacebuilding practices amidst climate conflict and how these can be embedded in peace education for a more decolonial education for peace. Our preliminary findings show how informal spaces of learning and education are created as youth face disrupted education, and how their narratives of understanding peace and peacebuilding have the potential to inform the educational practices and shape the policies on peace education.
Decentering the Human Subject in Geography: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections in the Age of AI

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Abstract

Linking their work to possibilities for positive social, political, and environmental change, geographers have adhered to multiple and sometimes discordant philosophical doctrines that, their differences notwithstanding, tend towards the common objective of decentering the human subject alongside the qualities traditionally identified with human exceptionalism. At the same time, new developments in AI and machine learning have troubled inherited notions of technologies as mere extensions or mediators of human affairs. In response to the double urgency of rethinking technological agency on the one side and human subjectivity on the other, this contribution critically engages with discussions around the posthuman informing new perspectives and methods in geography and its subfields. Without claiming to be exhaustive, this paper problematizes some of key ideas by seminal theorists from actor-network theory, feminist new materialism, nonrepresentational theory, and object-oriented ontology. While valuing and acknowledging major contributions to theory and critique of the (post)human, I argue that some relevant shortcomings identified in the literature demand attentive scrutiny. First, despite claims for replacing anachronistic dualisms with relational and systemic theories and methods, undeniable is the impulse either to erase human-nonhuman distinctions or to treat the nonhuman as an internally undifferentiated category encompassing everything other-than-human, including technology. Second, and related, what usually remains out of the frame is technicality, by which I mean in-depth theorization of the agential capabilities of contemporary computational media. Lastly, I argue that extending agency to nonhumans through recourse to such notions as ‘vital materiality’, ‘lively matter’, or ‘autonomy’ lacks analytical accuracy and historical specificity—dangerously veering toward animistic and anthropomorphic thinking.
A Genealogy of 'Participation' within Wildfire Disaster Risk Management

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Abstract

Over the last few decades, participation has become an often-demanded process within Disaster Risk Management (DRM) research, policy and practice (Maskrey, 2011). The current interest in participation has resulted from the ongoing reconfiguration of inclusive DRM driven by resistance to hierarchical, technocratic, command-and-control approaches (Grove, 2013). Indeed, the rationale behind participation within DRM is well recognised. It supports the understanding of the local dimensions and contexts of disaster, contributes to both reducing local people’s so-called vulnerability and harnessing their capacities, and appropriately centres the empowerment of local people (Gaillard, 2022). However, despite such mainstreaming, participation within DRM remains on ambivalent terrain. Critics argue that (in practice) participation can restrict meaningful politics, be exclusionary, defend historical patterns of domination and transform local people's everyday knowledge, skills, and practices into “sites of regulation and normalisation” (Grove, 2013; 571; Gaillard, 2022). Therefore, we utilise the “investigative method” of a genealogy to de-naturalise and render contingent participation within wildfire DRM (Crowley, 2009: 341). Here, we question how participation is presented within DRM and speculate on what this signifies. We explore how participation is often presented as a de-politicised and de-contextualised technique for fostering inclusive DRM, whilst simultaneously performing a political strategy and rationality for governing disaster and society at large. Building upon this, we problematize how participation, under the guise of empowerment and fostering ‘resilience’, is utilised as a cipher for dominant norms, values and approaches to DRM by tracing its linkages to entanglements of power.
Reflections on assemblage-based methodologies for critical disaster research

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Abstract

Many geographers are turning towards assemblage theory to make sense of the complex interplay of sociomaterial processes that lead to the emergence of a wide range of disasters (Donovan, 2017, 2020; Grove, 2013; Mertens, 2021; Pelling et al., 2021). McGowran and Donovan (2021) have proposed some conceptual tools and guiding methodological principles that might aid researchers in translating the growing theoretical literature on assemblage theory and disaster risk management into practice.

I will reflect on the translation of assemblage-thinking into assemblage-practice by drawing on my doctoral research into the causes and impacts of landslides in Kalimpong District, India. I will discuss how an emphasis on adapting the research to the geographical context of research helped me to build a collaborative approach to research that was predicated on understanding and discussing people’s interpretations and experiences of landslides as components of plural environments – or sociomaterial assemblages. These interpretations were often based on vastly different ontological foundations to those which underpin anglophone and/or scientific understandings of hazards and risks (Gaillard, 2019). Nonetheless, the flat ontology of assemblage theory that looks beyond essentialising categories of society and nature, or hazard and vulnerability, was useful synthesise conflicting interpretations of landslides. Such hybrid understandings might more effectively support geographically specific and hopefully impactful risk reduction measures (Gurung and McGowran, 2021). This process of synthesis might also help to expose problematic power relations between researcher and researched which, in turn, may contribute to the emergence of more just processes in disaster risk research (Yadav et al., 2021).
Technology as marker of the (in)human: an encounter at the edges of posthuman digitality

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Abstract

This paper centres the colonial pre-histories of ‘the digital’ to complicate posthumanist theorisations of human-technology relations. While posthumanist understandings of digital subjectivity helpfully undercut human exceptionalism, they insufficiently engage the human as the historico-political effect of negating the assumed non-technological colonial Other. Focusing on liberal humanism between the 16th and 19th centuries, this presentation understands the modern human as bound up in ‘technological onticide’. The presumed absence of technology became a measure of the Other’s inhumanity, at the same time as this Other was expected to be humanised through its technologisation. Accepting technology as an ontological marker of (in)humanity necessitates taking seriously human-technology disentanglements, technology as a terrain of thingification and animalisation, and the possibility of people always already being on the side of the nonhuman. Ultimately, the paper underscores the need for a decolonisation of scholarship on the digital that pays attention to the existence of ‘pre-digital’ technologies and how these carry conceptual after-lives that materially haunt contemporary digital life.
Imagining landscape futures: ‘hydro-social foresighting’ to engage non-expert stakeholders in catchment planning

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Abstract

All rural landscapes are shaped by water but some, such as the uplands of the South Pennines, are dominated by it through historic impoundment of river valleys for water supply reservoirs. Now privately owned, this infrastructure imposes a far-reaching legacy not only on the hydrosphere but on ecology, agriculture, landscape character, land use, land ownership, demographics, access and rights of way, recreation and rural economy. In these hybridised, contested waterscapes (e.g. Sultana, 2013, https://doi.org/10.1068%2Fd20010) decisions determining long-term prospects are largely controlled by the technocracy (water companies, regulators and policy-makers), local authorities and large landowners. These decisions and their outcomes are often strongly contested by the wider catchment community. Faced with complex, uncertain futures decision-makers increasingly turn to narratives tools to support scenario planning and long term strategy for these rural landscapes. However these narratives are themselves generated within the technocracy and can serve further to alienate other catchment stakeholders. Here, we present a robust methodology for construction of narrative futures from, by and with a range of non-experts and illustrate it using the results from a pilot study with members of the wild swimming community in the Upper Don catchment (South Yorkshire). Combining Q-method, Sci-fi prototyping and focus groups, this ‘hydro-social foresighting’ enables creation and interrogation of narratives grounded in contemporary attitudes towards water and comparable with ‘expert’-generated scenarios. Such narratives provide rich, localised insight into the capacity for and range of imagined futures among the non expert community in rural waterscapes, and consider the potential that exists to better understand the conflicts and consensus which underpin collective support for, and ultimate success of, decision-making towards resilient, sustainable and progressive catchment management.
The Gendered Geographies of Disaster

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Abstract

Disasters as major disruptions to social, natural and physical environments can showcase the intricate and complexities of individual and community senses of place(s). Through the lens of gender, understandings about disaster and place can be further explored by examining the gendered and social intersections within plural environments in disaster spaces, including the strong relationship between masculinity/ies and place and effectively, how place-based masculinity/ies shape men’s response to, and recovery from disaster. This talk will present research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand that examined rural men’s stories of the 2016 Kaikōura/Waiau earthquake. Through a feminist methodology, the complexities, subtleties and gendered organisations and emotions of rural men’s daily realities in disaster environment(s) will be explored. I will draw on Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital, bodily hexis and doxa and offer a unique examination of men’s gendered bodies and experiences within the home and community in (post-) disaster environments. Furthermore, Bourdieusian theory enables a detailed understanding of the complexities of changing senses of place, which is further shown by adopting Bourdieu’s concept of field as a geographic metaphor for place to highlight the intricate relationship between men and place and how masculine identities contribute towards men’s disaster experiences. This presentation will showcase the strengths and importance of interdisciplinary disaster research and the value of understanding the day-to-day realities of individuals and communities as they navigate the changing social, natural and physical environments caused by disaster.
Speculations toward a machinic justice

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Abstract

Core tenets underwriting social justice conversations need to be revisited in light of recent socio-technical and (bio)digital developments. The subject of justice has typically been framed as either the liberal-democratic citizen with rights and responsibilities, or the project of radical collectivist organizing and resistance. Recently, however, notions of justice have begun to expand to consider other living entities, such as non-human animals and larger biomes. This expansion is concomitant with increasingly blurred boundaries between living and non-living beings, as seen in the work of cyborg theory, more-than-human geographies, critical algorithm studies and post-digital philosophies. Among other transformations, silicon-based notions of machines are giving way to nucleic acids that store code, data, and decision-making capacities.

As a speculative theoretical exercise, we advance the notion of machinic justice to address implications of these rapid developments in and convergence of computing, statistical analysis, artificial intelligence, and genomics. We want to disrupt the ontological certainty around life and the subject around which justice conversations usually revolve, to broaden those subjects that may be thought of as legitimate claimants of justice. In particular, we want to ask: Who or what should be the subject of justice when machines take on characteristics of human decision-making? What types of injustice are emerging in a biodigital era and what types of resistance are necessary?

We take two cases as jumping-off points for these inquiries. In the first, we consider the application of gene editing technologies such as CRISPR to alter nonhuman species in the face of climate change and the implications of attendant narratives of ‘cracking the code’ of life. In the second, we consider criminal justice and healthcare algorithms for governing populations and life, as well as carrying out systemic injustice on humans’ behalf.
Questioning Intelligence in the Age of ‘AI’: Difference, un/intelligibility, and the in/human

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Abstract

Anti-racist, anti-colonial, feminist, queer, disability, and other critical scholarship examines the constitution of the human as an exclusionary category, standing in relation to what Sylvia Wynter referred to as “sub-genres of the human”—the inhuman, the subhuman. The enslaved, the colonized, and others have never been recognized as fully human, while it is their very subjugation that makes enactments of the liberal, autonomous subject possible. The notion of “intelligence” acts as a key epistemological vector through which the figure of the human and its others are defined and boundaries between them policed, even as there is no consensus as to what constitutes intelligence. Increasingly, intelligence is invoked to describe nonhumans, including animals and plants, but most notably so-called “artificial intelligence.” These tend to be defined in relation to an abstract, universal, and poorly defined notion of “human-level” intelligence. This paper questions whether discourses of intelligence can ever be meaningfully excised from their Humanist entanglements and hierarchies. Discourses of AI reproduce common imaginaries of the liberal Humanist subject as rational, autonomous, and perfectible, with visions of superintelligences or the Singularity as perhaps the pinnacle of Humanist ambition. At the same time, this “technoliberalism is an update on the liberal progress narrative that conceals ongoing conditions of racial subjugation and imperial expropriation” (Atanasoski and Vora, 2019: p. 28). I propose challenging discourses of intelligence, while shifting to the question of un/intelligibility. Whereas intelligence identifies the purported attributes of an individual, un/intelligibility highlights contingent relations among beings and the inherent limits of relationality.
Most-human: How non-human animal models of ‘intelligence’ codify (de)humanization

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Abstract

The category of ‘human’ has been wielded in practice as a cudgel to privilege or to persecute groups or entities designated as either in or outside its defined boundaries. The violent enforcement of ‘humanness’ varies over time and place, dependent on multiple power hierarchies such as racism, patriarchy, ableism, and capitalism. A recent trend in ‘expanding’ the category of the ‘human’ has included granting rights of personhood to some non-human animals, specifically those considered ‘intelligent,’ and therefore closer to ‘human.’ This paper explores animal models of ‘intelligence’ within imposed hierarchies of difference that align along an axis of sameness to those defining it. It is not just that the concept is often anthropomorphized, it is based largely on white, Western, male, hetero, sexually reproducing, bipedal, terrestrial, mammalian, carbon-based templates, undermining any purported objective assessment of some measurable ‘intelligence.’ From dolphins to aliens, John Lilly to SETI, scientific searches for non-human animal intelligence “remain framed by a hierarchical and progressivist worldview” (Shorter 2021), ordering ‘higher forms of life’ that reflect longstanding (de)humanization projects, a taxonomic “machine or device for producing the recognition of the human” (Agamben 2002). Examining how intelligence gets defined and operationalized – implicated by testing apparatus that prioritize masculinist ideals of logic and rational behavior and have little to do with any non-human animal’s needs, sensory differences, or social and ecological contexts – the aim of this research is to reflect on broader questions of difference and (de)humanization for all animal kind.
Who can afford to be human? Reinventing Affordable Housing in East London

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Abstract

As I sat in 2021 listening to resident accounts, living in Newham’s (East London) temporary accommodation, at the Focus E15 housing campaign meeting, a young Black British mother suddenly exclaimed: ‘Sometimes I think that the council thinks that we are not human’! She expressed the complete disregard towards her living conditions within a Newham council-owned temporary accommodation building. I want to take her, the young Black British mother’s, experiences and connect them to present debates in urban geography around an emerging global urban housing affordability crisis. Hereby, I highlight how debates around affordable housing rely on ethno-class specific constructions of the ‘human’. In order to do so, I bring urban geography scholarship on housing affordability into conversation with Black Geography studies that are informed by Sylvia Wynter’s anti-colonial thinking. Therefore, I devote special attention to the narrative invention and contestation of the ‘human’ and its Others that become articulated through her and others narratives around the notion of ‘affordability’ within Newham’s urban development processes. These theoretical considerations derived from her and others rely on three sources: (1) empirical material acquired through participant observations with the ‘Focus E15 campaign’; (2) interviews with urban development officials; and (3) analysis of national, citywide and local planning documents. Overall, I point towards the selective construction of the ‘human’ within Newham’s urban development, as well as to the possibilities of thinking affordability otherwise that emerge once we draw attention to these voices (her and Others) left out of the dominant narrative of the ‘human’.
Digital platforms as urban communication: mediums, content, context

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Abstract

One of the ways in which urban datafication ‘comes to ground’ in cities is through platformization. In this paper, I argue that one of the dominant yet underacknowledged ways in which we sensorily experience visual-material instances of platformization on the cityscape is as modes and media of urban communication. Mobilizing Giorgia Aiello’s (2021) ‘visual-material’ approach that recognizes built environments to communicate both semiotically and somatically, I engage three select instances of platformization in Toronto and Vancouver through Aiello’s co-developed heuristic of the mediums, content, and context of urban communication (Aiello & Tosoni, 2016; Tosoni & Aiello, 2020). As mediums, platformized materialities in the form of street signs designate exclusive uses of public space for mobility platforms, communicating the spatial conditions of platform urbanism. As the contents of communication, stickers and placards advertising on-demand meal-delivery available at a restaurant venue signify the platform-driven transformation of the social relations that make the delivered meal take place. And as context, broader trends of the platformization of labour imbue communication by other, non-platform based materialities – such as posters calling on urban gig workers to unionize – with meaning. I argue that an urban communication framework contributes to geographical scholarship on platform urbanism by nuancing our understandings of how digitally platforms and platform technology capital materially secure and sustain themselves in cities through their material, semiotic, and referential communicative capacities, which both structure and open onto the terrains of digitally-mediated urban experience.
Three Ways of Looking at the Sphinx: De Castro, Hegel, Povinelli

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Abstract

"The Original Condition: Human being has not yet separated its own being-for-self from that of things; it sees into the heart of things. Nature is not yet for it something negative, something obscured ... spirit is immediately in the concept, knowing the universal, true nature of things immediately, understanding them intuitively, precisely because its intuition is not an external one" (Hegel 2006 240).

"Perspectivism is not ... a [type] of animism ... but a concept, ... the most interesting use for it consists not so much in classifying cosmologies that appear exotic to us but in counter-analyzing those anthropologies that have become far too familiar" (Viveiros De Castro 2017 78).

This paper enacts repeated returns to the mythic figure of the Sphinx, as grounded in Hegel’s treatment of the Egyptian mystery schools and the lesser sophistication he affords to prelogocentric stages in his history and philosophy of religion. The sphinx is situated here as a fulcrum of the emergence of the human, the objectification of the animal, and the triumph of Occidental logos. This fulcrum is approached through variable speculations on the question of animality and the human, weaving a nuanced discourse from Viveiros De Castro’s Perspectivism, Elizabeth Povinelli’s Geontopower and Hegel’s exegesis on the symbolic role of animality in Lectures on Religion as supplemented by Derrida’s treatment of Hegel’s semiology, “The Pit and Pyramid” (1986), an exegesis of Hegel’s Lectures on Aesthetics (1835).
Can you think of yourself like a wind?

Carl Olsson
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Abstract

The Anthropocene thesis is often taken to entail an end to humanism. As Paul Crutzen put it: ‘nature is us’ (Crutzen & Schwägerl, 2011). But if nature is us, then we are also nature. And if geographers agree to think about humans with direct reference to our causal role among Earth Systems, they would seem to reawaken old problems with naturalism in the discipline. Where, for instance, should humanist categories like free will fit in geography’s emerging geologic self-understanding?

In this paper I discuss what a thoroughgoing naturalist break with humanism could mean and what its consequences would be for geography. I focus on naturalism in the sense of thinking about oneself as being, ultimately, on par with other terrestrial processes. How literal can such thinking be in geography?

To showcase one possible limit, I refer to an image from a talk by the dance artist Hijikata Tatsumi (2000[1985]) illustrating a human wind doll (kazedaruma). This is a figure quite literally emptied and carried forward by the wind. In the sense that breaking with humanism also means to displace human agency, I make the case that in some respects posthumanist geographies have not followed through with naturalism in the relevant sense – and perhaps for very good reasons.

My paper thus emphasizes the problems and contradictions that can occur when humanism is abandoned and what these limits might tell us about what geographical thought might and might not be able to achieve. Are there things we cannot think in geography?
The analysis of public space quality in terms of flexibility and diversity for the age-friendly design of parks

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Abstract

Little is known about what spatial features of parks older people see as most importance for encouraging them to visit and be active in these spaces. This paper examines the relative significance of parks and explores different spatial factors in connection with flexibility and diversity that effect social interaction among different age groups in the context of China. Utilizing extensive empirical field work of observation and ethnographic interviews on where and how social activity occur amongst older people, this paper examines and reconsiders how they interact in parks. This paper uses a micro-design analysis approach to reveal that social interaction occurs through a diverse functional ‘in-betweenness’ (with emphasis on child play functions), the regularity of props and edges that enhance active views of ‘positive’ space, and extend concepts of flexibility. Moreover, adjacent diverse functions not only extend concepts of diversity, they are also conducive to flexibility, thus creating more social interaction. Besides this, seasonally changeable spatial features can create more social opportunities among older people within familiar space. In addition, prevailing social conditions in terms of congestion and events are also significant. Ultimately, the findings bring optimised suggestions to practice and offer new insights on how to design more age-friendly public spaces in city.
Rethinking the (in)human in geography: Catastrophic drive and the rupture of climate change

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Abstract

The term ‘inhuman geography’ originates in the work of Nigel Thrift, who coined it to capture the intermingling of human and non-human actors in a world after ‘the end of nature.’ For Thrift, the inhuman denotes a realm of the non-binary, of in-betweenness, similar to Haraway’s approach of the ‘cyborg’ or Latour’s notion of ‘actants.’ This paper extends the concept of the inhuman by giving it a psychoanalytic twist. Following a psychoanalytic distinction between humans and non-humans, the paper adopts the idea that the human subject is essentially inhuman, a subject of the (death) drive. Against this background, the inhuman can be considered an ultimate figure of human distinctiveness. The inhuman is not the ‘other-’ or ‘more-than-human’ but a catastrophic dimension proper to the human condition itself. The paper then discusses the potential of such a perspective on the inhuman for engaging with anthropogenic climate change. If we locate the inhuman at the core of human (and in particular capitalist) societies, this opens a new possibility of proposing that climate change can be defined as the inhuman impact on Earth’s climate. The uncanny mixture of rising sea levels, melting glaciers, shifting climate zones, spreading parasites and tropical diseases, more intense or more frequent severe weather phenomena, and of course, the massive increase of environmental refugees – all these are symptoms of the catastrophic drive that shapes the inhuman geographies of the past, present, and future.
Regional inequalities in mental health in and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Background:
A large body of research has demonstrated that mental health in England declined during the most intense period of the pandemic and that there were inequalities in these mental health affects across age, gender, ethnicity and income levels. However, despite evidence of regional inequalities in lockdowns, cases and mortality from Covid-19, regional inequalities in mental health have received less attention.

Methods:
This study used mainstage Understanding Society data from 2019 and monthly Covid-19 surveys, coupled with English Prescribing Data (EPD). GHQ-12 was used to assess non-psychotic mental health problems. EPD was used to identify trends of antidepressant drugs prescribed across England as an indicator for depressive disorders. Descriptive analyses were performed to analyse trends over time by region. Subsequent multilevel regression analyses were performed to determine key drivers of reductions in mental health as well as to examine regional inequalities.

Results:
Average GHQ-12 scores at the last Covid-19 survey wave remained lower than the pre-pandemic average. We found evidence of geographical inequalities in mental health which were particularly stark for those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Similar inequalities were also apparent in depressive disorders assessed using the EPD across England.

Conclusion:
The results of this study highlight that inequalities in mental health, particularly between regions, appear to have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The results signal the regions and groups which could benefit most from any targeted interventions to improve mental health as the national focus now shifts to Covid-19 recovery.
The Raciality of Disaster Preparedness in Turkey

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Abstract

Over the past decade, disaster preparedness has become a contested arena where Turkey’s state-society relations are worked out. A new law issued in 2011, promising to disaster-proof the country, has not only given way to top-down transformation projects but also triggered grassroots responses. Existing critiques of the law and its practical implications revolve around the problematization of top-down transformation projects for their profit-led character in a neoliberal context. While indispensably highlighting material underpinnings and consequences, this problematization still falls short in the way it overlooks the socially and geographically differentiated effects of top-down disaster preparedness. I argue that the differences at work here must be grounded in long-standing forms of racialization resulting from Turkey’s histories of violence that imbricate the nation-state with coloniality and that have manifested in emergencies declared in the name of national security. I build on recent and ongoing fieldwork among communities who are most adversely affected by such emergencies not simply to highlight their marginalization but to think with the grassroots practices of urban resilience that they themselves have been developing. Focusing on multiple sites from across Turkey, I explore disaster preparedness both as an arena where the state seeks to impose itself environmentally on communities and as one where antiracist ecologies are imagined and enacted.
New Zealand’s ‘Left Behind Places’: community and state responses to persistent uneven geographical development.

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Abstract

After the 1980s New Zealand transitioned from a social-welfare to a neoliberal state, a process which, over time has exacerbated ‘uneven geographical development’ spatially and in socio-economic terms. Since then significant growth has taken place in the metropolitan areas, leaving many of the ‘regions’ as ‘left behind’ places, occupied by what are locally referred to as ‘zombie towns’. Local responses from such places have, over time, experienced mixed fortunes with cases of successful responses to marginalization, where it occurs, being attributed to place based leadership, community cohesion and social capital. At a national level such local initiatives have been largely unsuccessful in reversing growing regional inequalities, and in 2017 the national Treasury warned of the risks of persistent economic and spatial disparities. This led to the introduction of an old-style regional development intervention package known as the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) which provided sectorally based support to economic activities and sought to address infrastructural deficits in lagging regions. Political change and the COVID-19 pandemic has trimmed the fund, such that the programme now continues in a scaled backed form. This paper details the evolving nature of New Zealand’s post-1980 political-economic transition, associated socio-economic disparities and the rationale and nature of PGF support. Through a series of case-studies, from before and after the PGF the varying impacts of various interventions are detailed, with some of the more positive outcomes linked to projects which have drawn on external support catalysed or complemented local initiatives. Drawing on regional resilience thinking and evolutionary economic geography, the paper argues that while not all ‘left behind’ places can reverse their economic trajectories, in some cases combinations of external support, local activism and available economic opportunities can arrest decline and potentially forge new alternative economic pathways.
Algorithmic Crowding and Urban Theory

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Abstract

Although large gatherings of people used to be at the center of attention for crowd theorization, in some contemporary domains, non-humans are behind most of the crowding activity. For example, in the financial markets, the majority of orders to buy or sell securities is now sent by fully automated algorithms. These algorithms have largely replaced the human traders who used to populate exchange trading floors, and whose erratic behaviors urban sociologists such as Robert E. Park saw as being similar to those occurring in the urban streets. This paper discusses (1) how the rise of automated trading reshapes the connection between crowds, cities, and financial markets; (2) how urban theory can shed light on algorithmic crowding; and (3) how paying analytical attention to the spatial and temporal dimensions of automated markets may lead to a reassessment of classical ideas concerning the politics of crowds.
Room for Manoeuvres: Crowds, urban order, and strike tactics in Sweden, 1909.

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Abstract

Authorities often manage the threat of potentially unruly crowds by denying protesters legal spaces to assemble, making rights to public space a key point of conflict. But crowds might also assemble for public protests in spaces less unambiguously public, undermining authorities’ room for manoeuvre. One example of such a strategy is the Swedish People’s parks, built and owned by the labour movement from the 1890s onward.

In this paper we trace these parks’ role during the 1909 general strike, the first nation-scale clash between Sweden’s mostly Social-democratic unions and an increasingly coordinated capitalist class. As 300,000 workers went on a month-long strike regional and local authorities, urged by employers, re-activated 19th century public order charters to proclaim 420 sites ‘protected’. Thereby many roads, harbours and railroad areas, municipal facilities, and industrial lots were suddenly declared off-limits for political manifestations. Furthermore, nine out of Sweden’s 24 regions, issued a general ban on crowds (Eklund, 1974, Olofsson, 2018).

Pushed out of the cities and away from public space, striking workers now flocked to rural or peri-urban People’s Parks, where large, orderly, protests became a central way to show the strength of unionised labour. As employer-state alliances barred protests on public land, the political potency of crowds instead re-emerged in new spaces and forms, illuminating both the need to question the urban focus in much political theory, and underscoring the fundamental legal role played by property - public, private and common - in the formation and policing of crowds alike.
Governmentality and Alcohol in Sydney’s Public Spaces

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Abstract

This paper examines the cartographic governmentality of alcohol-free zoning which, on New Year’s Eve in particular, exemplifies a commodification of crowds through the production of urban spectacle combined with a (de)legitimation of types of crowds and crowd behaviour. Research and policy on alcohol consumption is dominated by alcohol-related ‘imaginaries’ (Jayne & Valentine, 2016) that posit a linear-causal relation between alcohol-consumption and violence. The City of Sydney moved to offset this reputation by promoting ‘civilised drinking’ within Sydney-as-a-‘global city’, built around the needs and desires of gentrified consumers. However, appeals to the possibility of ‘enculturating’ drinking (the ‘culturalist argument’) obscure contested histories of technical and regulatory intervention into social drinking in urban spaces and function aspirationally as justification for new technical measures. New Year’s Eve in Sydney is now characterised by the ‘over-programming’ of space though fencing, ticketing, alcohol-free zoning and policing, contrasting markedly with the “long street drinking tradition in Western societies, at beaches, parks and public celebrations” (Room & Pennay 2012). The privatisation of public drinking is enacted via the liquor license-as-mechanism, whereby private licensees are freighted with the responsibility of ensuring orderly behaviour and promoting ‘civilised’ drinking. This contributes to new urban exclusions and ‘spatiotemporal configurations’ (Wadds 191-192), diminishing possibilities for public conviviality and sociability.

The NSW government’s ‘Alfresco Revolution’ seeks to consign to history the cumulative effects of eight years of ‘lockout laws’ and COVID-lockdowns, encouraging the recovery of hospitality and the wider economy. While outdoor dining and drinking are presently promoted, the ‘Alfresco Revolution’ is continuous with prior discourses of small bars, world cities and ‘civilised’ drinking, obscuring the increasingly presumptive framing of public drinking as criminogenic. The present conjuncture sees the epidemiological and economic rationality of outdoor socialising come up against governmental rationalities characterised by enclosure of public space. I call this strategy of growing, sifting and refining kinds of crowds according to economic and reputational logics of city-branding, ‘governing with and against alcohol’.
The Haunting of the Crowd: The ghosts of mass demonstrations in Kyiv, Ukraine

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Abstract

The presentation draws from ethnographic research conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine, in September 2021, part of a broader research project that considers Ukrainian identities, spaces, and contexts. The discussion is concerned with what is left in the wake of crowds that gathered for mass demonstrations, recognising what remains of protests when they no longer occupy space. Two strands of thinking are explored to arrive at the significance of spatality and tactics of crowds in politically and socially contested Ukraine. First, an analysis of how Kyiv holds space for the legacy of mass protests through official and unofficial commemorative memorials, exhibits, and statues (erected and pulled down) and the importance of these sites and topographies to Ukrainian selfhood is presented. Second, it is suggested that former crowds haunt these places and materialities. It is argued that the haunting that persists in these sites gives them meaning. Moreover, reconciling with the ghosts of mass demonstrations in Kyiv that toppled a government, statues of communist leaders, and changed the face of Ukrainian urban life, is confronted and contextualised with the contemporaneous reality of war in Ukraine.
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Imagining/Managing/Mobilising the Urban Crowd in Istanbul

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Abstract

Le Bon’s conceptualisation of the crowd as impulsive with no reasoning and dangerous if not managed suggests strong leadership. Accordingly, crowds are tamed by symbols, myths, spectacles, images and words that are used by leaders to remake the state and society. This seems like the path towards authoritarian populism that President Erdoğan took in Turkey. Istanbul, the former imperial city, with its Ottoman mosques, tombs and buildings formed an important backdrop for a set of myths that were mobilised under Erdoğan’s AKP [Justice and Development Party], the current ruling party. This paper questions the role of the urban in imagining, managing and mobilising the crowd. Erdoğan’s practice of political urbanisation has considerably transformed urban space and urban life in a polarised way. The rise of Islamist politics in Turkey since the 1990s spread from the municipal level to the national electoral victories of the AKP in 2002. Consequently, there have been increased numbers of staged urban events and performances, which entailed a remaking, as well as an intensified use, of urban spaces. The number of pedestrianised squares with mosques increased as the AKP municipalities enlarged pre-existing small squares in the city centres by closing roads to traffic. Many urban public squares were rebuilt in this manner into wide, plain concrete-covered areas to be used as multi-purpose event spaces under the control of municipalities, where national, religious, social and cultural events and festivals are organised. These squares proved advantageous for the AKP government in mobilising crowds after the coup attempt in 2016. Focusing on the transformation of public spaces as well as celebrations, commemorations and demonstrations, this paper argues that designing and organising spaces and events were a project of creating a new form of urban life and urban citizenship, which also paved the way for authoritarian politics in the city by transforming urbanites into the supportive crowds of the new regime.
Social Life of Disaster: Reading Pain and Loss in the Himalayas

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Abstract

The Himalayas are fraught with multiple realities. It is shaped by social, political and spiritual values – making it relevant across the borders for several reasons. It is also a landscape that is dotted with the hydro project, especially the western Himalayas in India. These projects justifiably serve a strategic interest for the country by producing electricity. However, they are designed as architectural projects in the fragile ecologies of the Himalayas. In the wake of the emergent climate crisis, they are also rendered sites of potential hazards for more than one reason.

This paper considers using a case study of a hydro project disaster in Raini village, Joshimath (Uttarakhand). It draws on fieldwork conducted in this region for over six months. The case study is used to explore two specific contours of disasters. First, it explores the social life of disaster by probing into vernacular – of both loss and resilience. In doing so, it foregrounds claims of community folded in narratives of disaster within confines of loss, livelihood and displacement. Second, it recounts the story of a man who survived the death of his brother in this incident. It emphasises ways in which the reportage on these events obscures detailed lives of remains buried or reportedly dead in this story. Combining these two strands, the paper offers a complex web of politics that shape the lives of both mountains and those who come to work here as migrants – insisting us to enter the social life of disasters.
Crampedness. “Es wird eng! Es wird trist!”: Zurich’s Promised, Threatened and Crowded Futures

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Abstract

Linear prognoses of population growth have become ubiquitous in cities worldwide, striving for global status in their role as anticipatory growth machines. In Zurich, Switzerland’s largest and wealthiest city, the municipality has been busy designing scenarios of economic progress through demographic growth ever since the beginning of its current wave of urban prosperity in the early 2000s. In 2018, the city released a 166-page master plan (‘Zürich 2040’), based on a vision of 25% population increase by 2040. Such prognoses of densification and growth, disembodied and yet seemingly imperturbable, have considerable impact on the affective world of local communities, and are further articulated as urban promises or threats (Kemmer & Simone 2021; Färber 2020) in political initiatives of varying alignments. In Switzerland, the political sphere is strongly shaped by direct democratic practices and the moral and identity-shaping force they exert (Kriesi 2005). In this paper, I focus on tracing the discourse of “crampedness” ethnographically and historically in the urban context of Zurich, by illustrating how imaginaries of overcrowding and density-related stress (Dichtestress) (Odenwald 2021) have seeped not only into direct democratic discourses, but also into the everyday practices of activists and dwellers surrounding the city’s Brachen: vacant lots repurposed as urban commons by local groups, yet turned into strategic land reserves devoted to the future growth envisioned by the municipality. Aiming to illustrate how visions of a growth-resistant ‘urban otherwise’ molded on these sites through activities of appropriation, counter-planning and communal maintenance travel from radical left circles into more conservative ones and vice-versa, I introduce the Brachen activists’ utopian leftist imaginaries alongside the Swiss far-right’s “anti-urban” discourses (Audikana & Kaufmann 2021), foregrounding how they both intersect with environmental racism (Hage 1998) and anti-migration sentiments related to overcrowding. By drawing together fieldwork material from participation in direct democratic practices related to the Brachen’s futures, and feminist ethnographic reflections on embodied perceptions and sensory articulations of crampedness on these sites, I ask: Which urban subjects get to articulate promises and threats of crampedness in Zurich, and whose voices remain unheard?
Geographic Imaginaries of volcanic spaces and places in Chile and Argentina

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Abstract

The literature demonstrates that the effective study and management of disasters requires consideration of local perspectives, experiences, and knowledge. Despite this, most disaster policies are top down in nature and divide the world into certain categories, assuming that the audience share the worldview and priorities of the experts that created them. This is particularly true of volcanoes, where risk is often detached from other aspects of life and alternative experiences and the benefits of volcanic areas are overlooked. Equally, there remains a persistent divide between physical studies of hazards (deploying quantitative methods and analysis) and social studies of vulnerability (using qualitative methods and analysis) that hinders investigation into the spaces and relationships between these two approaches.

This talk will propose the use of ‘geographical imaginaries’ as an orientating concept in disaster research to address this, seeking to look beyond narrow conceptualizations of risk and instead examine the interconnections between local culture, politics, and the environment, with implications for designing effective disaster risk reduction. The utility of this approach will be examined through several case studies of volcanic imaginaries in Chile and Argentina. Specifically, the presentation will detail emerging results from community and expert interviews undertaken for the ongoing ERC IMAGINE project. This includes data collected within communities living near the volcanos of Chaitén, Lonquimay, Llaima, Villarica, and Lanin; presenting a diverse cross-section of eruptive histories (with transboundary impacts), and allowing for some observations on the role of memory and eruptive histories.
Veganism at the bottom of the world: A case study of vegan communities in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand

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Abstract

Considering the widespread impacts of industrial animal agriculture on non-humans, humans and environments in a time of anthropogenic climate change, my research explored what can be learned from vegan communities towards building more ethical, sustainable and resilient food systems. Using a case study approach, I investigated three vegan societies in the South Island of New Zealand Aotearoa, the Christchurch Vegan Society, Dunedin-Otepoti Vegan Society, and the Invercargill Vegan Society. Through interviews, focus groups and participant observation, I gathered data which was analysed by drawing on ecofeminist theory and communities economies framing. My findings reveal how veganism is informed by an ethics of multispecies care and practiced through a plethora of nuanced and context-dependent lifestyle choices.
Exploring the potential of rhythmanalysis to the (de)/(re)-territorialisation of self in trajectories of migration: Romanian migrants in the UK

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Abstract

In this presentation I want to reflect on the ways in which the intertwined rhythms of education, work, housing, home, place, family, age and body - that are elsewhere boxed into the aggregate concept of life-course - contribute to the (de)/(re)-territorialisation of self in trajectories of migration, and to the formation of hope and disaster as moments of eurhythmic or arrhythmic intersections. As Henri Lefebvre and others called for mobilising rhythmanalysis to obtain a richer understanding of urban processes, I wish to take the challenge of exploring its potential for a richer understanding of migrants’ trajectories as deeply personal experiences of traversing, ignoring, struggling against or working with structures and assemblages of all sorts.

To pursue my goal, I experiment with the visual method of ‘the river (or pathway) of life’: I invited 17 Romanian migrants in the UK to draw their life/migration history in the form of a river (or pathway), noting moments and influences of significance, which were then used for elicitation in in-depth interviews (a few participants were unable to draw and I explored narrated forms of the river of life). Reflecting on these, and on my own mini self-ethnography of migration, I try to understand the “bitter sweet” experience of migration and the territorialisation of self in between cultures, places, geographies. As my particular focus is the role that housing plays in migration trajectories, I will use the concepts of (un)/home-ing to understand (de)-territorialisation. At the moment of this submission, this is work in progress.
In the wake of the snow frog: indigenous ontologies of landslides in the Kanchenjunga Landscape, Nepal

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Abstract

Although the Himalayas are experiencing more GLOFs than ever before, these hazards are not new, and their longer-term legacies demand examination. In the landscape surrounding Mount Kangchenjunga, Nepal, three major historical GLOFs (1963, 1968, 1980) continue to powerfully feature in the collective memories of two affected villages. In all three cases, the agent responsible was believed to be the ‘snow frog’ (khang ba/khang sbal), the “supreme leader of the water” in the region. A creation of local Buddhist and pre-Buddhist deities, the khang ba unleashed catastrophic floods in the villages of Walung and Yangma in retaliation for perceived moral transgressions. In the case of Walung, he took half of the village with him, permanently altering the demographic and economic profile of this strategic trade entrepôt. This paper follows in the wake of the khang ba in the villages where the land slipped away. Based on ethnographic research in Nepal’s Taplejung District, it uncovers the plural causalities and ontologies of indigenous disaster narratives in a multi-hazard prone landscape. As crises unfold across multiple spatial, temporal and spiritual registers in the Nepal Himalaya, the contrasting narratives assigned to discrete, historical landslides and the more recent, ‘slow-burn’ calamity of climate change are taking on increased salience. And yet, like many manifestations of indigenous knowledge, the khang ba faces an unstable future. More than 40 years after the last major event, but in a trans-Himalayan context of magnifying threat, the likelihood of khang ba to ‘sink or swim’ hangs upon the trajectories of future crises, encroaching modernity, and ageing eyewitnesses.
Bypassing the cloud? JAM, a new architecture of rule in India?

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Abstract

Scholars who study politics in Indian policy process have uncovered the many viscous clouds whose high dense internal compositions create complex shifting dynamic logics that are hardly aligned and streamlined in a hierarchical form that is a prerequisite for the policy, implementation, enforcement, monitoring, evaluation protocol of bureaucratized governmental rule. (Sundaresan, Chatterjee, Kaviraj, Pilavsky). Given that large parts of governing occur through this could, the possibilities of governing depends on the possibilities offered by this cloud. The architecture of this cloud frustrates many reformers who believes in, ‘right policies deliver right results’. Many attempts at such reform have all become partially or fully coopted into this cloud.

Can and does digital infrastructures and its accouterments succeed in bypassing this cloud and establish a new architecture of rule in India?

In this paper we will examine if the JAM trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, mobile) and its distinct data points can constitute a renewed political geography and renewed ruler-subject relations? Does it bypass material and human intermediaries (paper-based systems, state governments, local governments and so on) and enable the god (Prime Minister’s office) to directly reach its devotees (citizens)? How does, if at all, other capillary instruments include the GST (Council), 7th finance commission, specific developmental programs, and digital apps aids feasibility of this new architecture of rule. How are contextual rationalities and affective discourses entangled with this? Does these digital welfare infrastructures reproduce the myth of the leader and yield a new architecture of rule for authoritarian populism?

Are the many gods of antiquity finally merging into the omnipotent god of bureaucratic modernity in India?
Contested governance of protests and assemblies in the pandemic: UK and Australia

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Abstract

Among the many restrictions on movement and activity that have been imposed on urban populations in the UK and Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic, the right to protest has been significantly curtailed. New police powers and penalties were introduced, justified as temporary measures necessitated by a public health emergency, some of which instigate longer-term shifts. The question of what kind of ‘right to protest’ should be articulated and enacted in a pandemic, when there are real risks of viral transmission in crowds, goes to the heart of political freedom in the city. In this paper, we seek to steer a path that refuses both the sovereign-state logic of exception which is accompanied by extension and application of police power against protest, and the sovereign-individual assertion that no intrusions on the freedom/liberty to protest can be justified. We look to the actions of protesters themselves, in order to work through the forms of self-governance that can both recognise the ‘biological real’ of transmission and uneven vulnerability to infection, and facilitate political demonstrations.
Race and the Boundaries of Survival: Border Control and Global Architectures of Human In/Security

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Abstract

Considering the scale of dispossession and displacement today (as seen at the root of refugee crises), it is imperative we understand how policies governing migration, political inclusion, and social support have globally and historically intertwined to constitute a racialized legal ordering of people. In this paper, I trace the historical origins of today’s state systems of border control to global (inter-)imperial regulation of the mobile poor in the 19th and 20th centuries, using the case of legal systems in modern Japan. Specifically, I show how states (both imperial and colonial) established these regimes as part of imperialist—and ethno-supremacist—aims of instituting greater security for so-called “civilized” lives and spaces globally, concentrated in cities and metropoles, by controlling the socio-spatial mobility of racialized others. Through a transhistorical analysis, I demonstrate how this legal architecture has been modified and sustained over time such that it serves to re/enforce global inequalities today.

Based on archival findings collected during funded research in Japan (2017-2019), I identify how bordering practices and related policies stemmed from strategies used in 19th century homelessness regulation. These strategies for controlling population flows and limiting aid by rendering people illegitimate, or illegal, were gradually built into emergent migration and welfare-state policy regimes in the early-20th century. After illustrating how intertwining migration, identification, and welfare-state policies have effectively controlled socio-spatial mobility throughout the 20th century, I highlight the role of historically-entrenched ideas in perpetuating racialized socio-spatial inequalities globally through the transnational refashioning of policy systems and, by extension, the “[differential management and distribution of] exposure to the risk of violence, mutilation, and death” (De Genova and Roy 2020:360).

After fleeing Nazi occupied Austria and becoming stateless, Stefan Zweig wrote “I belong to nowhere now, I am a stranger or at most a guest everywhere” (Zweig, 1942, 18). When one lacks citizenship and becomes stateless, one is denied formal identity, left in a legal no-man’s land, formally excluded from society (Staples, 2007). No government takes responsibility for their protection; a “Homo Sacer” not to be sacrificed, but if killed, nobody would be condemned (Agamben, 1998, 71). State registration and the introduction of legal identity documents are often cited by international organisations to be the solution to end statelessness. This can be seen in Action 8 of the UNHCR Global Action Plan to end statelessness, stating the responsibility to “issue nationality documentation to those with entitlement to it” (2014, 26) and the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 “legal identity for all”. However, as identified by Brinham “documents do not merely prevent and reduce statelessness; they also produce and reproduce it in multiple ways” (2019, 168). Documents not only relate to whether people are seen or unseen by the state, but also how and for what purpose (Brinham, 2019), “lead[ing] to both entitlement and deprivation, security and insecurity, empowerment and control, emancipation and repression” (Chhotray and McConnell, 2018, 118).

Drawing on the experience of research with Stateless individuals in the UK, this paper will explore the everyday administrative violence experienced by stateless persons before, during and after the process to legally regularise their status. This paper will explore the multiple hostile borders encountered by stateless individuals in their everyday lives and examine the simultaneous, contradictory affects of emancipation and repression instigated by UK identity documentation, challenging the view that state documentation provides the ultimate solution to statelessness.
Living on with the nuclear everyday: infrastructure, slow violence and the politics of quiescence

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Abstract

Communities living with nuclear infrastructures have widely been positioned as quiescent and accepting of the risks posed, responses that have been principally theorised as rooted in everyday practices of familiarity, risk denial and economic dependency. Drawing on ethnographic data collected in 2008 in the village of Seascale, which neighbours the UK’s Sellafield site, and on recent thinking on nuclear and toxic geographies, this paper troubles the idea of nuclear quiescence. It addresses the slow violence inherent in living on with nuclear infrastructure: gradual, drawn-out effects and affects of nuclearity on place that are barely visible in the routines of everyday life. I locate these subtle expressions of social and geographic damage in techno-political relations of security, secrecy and domination which obscure the exceptionalism of the nuclear industry. In doing so, the paper challenges passive renderings of toxic victimhood by emphasising modes of pragmatic resistance – situated critiques of the framing of their community as damaged and of the relations of care performed by the nuclear industry – that problematise the identity and structural relations of being nuclear. In doing so I consider how geographers might theorise the spatial practices and politics of these ‘slow’ and partial expressions of the unjust relationship between nuclear economies, infrastructures and places – in contexts that are characterised by political-economic dependency and domination.
What do the community practices of social care services look like in the post-welfare cities including London and Taipei?

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Abstract

Whist the privatisation of social care services is welcomed by policymakers in the Global North (Amin, 2009b, 2009a; United Nations, 2020), the space of the third sector is expanding by neoliberal policies including the UK (e.g., personalisation) (Needham et al., 2016; Power et al., 2021) and East Asian countries (Furuto, 2013; Walker & Wong, 2005). Geographers provide useful empirical evidence in the UK experience to understand how the community practices of social care services are shaped by this privatisation in the local partnership within post-welfare cities (DeVerteuil, 2015; Power et al., 2021). However, it is lacking evidence to explore such community practices in other the post-welfare cities of the Global North.

My research will draw on the comparison with different evolving patterns of a neoliberal welfare state between the UK (e.g., roll-out and roll-back neoliberalism) (Peck, 2002) and East Asian countries including Taiwan (i.e., evolving from Confucian and developmental welfare state to neoliberal one) (Hill & Hwang, 2005; White & Goodman, 2006). Indeed, it will provide a contextual framework to understand the similarities and differences of the development of a local welfare state between London and Taipei. Indeed, it is helpful to understand how local people use social entrepreneurship (B.R. & C.E., 2010; Chell, 2007) to meet needs for social-care provision in a distinctive context of local partnership within the third sector.
Who Wants to Design the Whole City as a Playground?

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Abstract

This research focuses on the utopian urban projects that can be called as potential playgrounds. These playful utopias, centering the form of production and performing all production through play, concentrate on urban depictions that question the concepts of leisure time and entertainment from a new perspective.

After the Second World War, the utopias that created an architecture that wanted to dominate the order and put the space on the center, were filled with the visual productions of the artists, architects and urban planners of the period which consist of the slogans such as “playful life” and “real experience”. The common aspect of these intellectual movements, which articulate the development of a new type of space, is that they reveal playful arrangements that allow creative actions in daily life. These utopian projects, which are designed for the “future new human profile”, are open to use in different ways, can be changed and are designed with different parameters according to the user with a transformable city plan can be defined as potential playgrounds because they center free and creative actions and have vague spaces that keep the exploration alive.

Some of the projects are New Babylon by graphic artist Constant Nieuwenhuys (The project which creative actions are the focal point of the design, depicts a city where the production system is automated, the employee gets rid of compulsory activities and turns to play and creative actions), projects of Archigram group, led by David Green and Peter Cook (The main feature of their production is based on individual choice, participation and technology) and the Fun Palace project, designed by Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, (a representation of a playful activism, consisting of experimental spatial fictions that bring together many different actions).
“You have to exaggerate your worst day”: Justifying Disability Living Allowance to the austere welfare state

Rosalie Warnock
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Abstract

The term ‘parent carer’ (as distinct from ‘parent’ or ‘carer’) signifies a specific role encompassing types of labour that are additional to the caring responsibilities a parent might typically expect to have for a child (Petriwskyi et al., 2017). Drawing on recent in-depth qualitative research with 15 parent carers of autistic children in London, I use parents’ accounts of applying for Disability Living Allowance to show how they must make their ‘ordinary’ extra-ordinary, both to justify their children’s right to additional welfare support, and to maintain their own respectability. I show how, while parent carers’ lives are far from ‘ordinary’, they are ‘ordinary’ to them – and this is itself often a coping mechanism. Yet it is only through evidencing their extra-ordinariness that parent carers can secure the support which enables them to cope. The paper sets out two implications of this. The first is the sheer depth of the entrenchment of neoliberal ideology and austerity policy in the UK, which has fundamentally changed the nature and scope of the welfare state in the UK (Hamnett, 2014). The second is the emotional implication for parent carers of: having to admit their lives – and their children – are not ‘ordinary’; having to write about and provide evidence of their children’s difficulties in great depth; and having to publicly admit that they are struggling and cannot manage on their own. Forcing parent carers to re-live their worst moments and then to document that for someone else to decide whether they are ‘bad’ enough to warrant support, is a particularly sadistic example of the cruelty of the contemporary welfare state – and one which deserves further academic attention.
Repoliticising integrated care in turbulent times

Colin Lorne
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Abstract

In this paper, I discuss how ‘integration’ is mobilised as a seemingly irresistible solution to the failures of market-orientated healthcare reforms in times of austerity. Focusing on the making and translating of ‘accountable’ or ‘integrated care’ within the English NHS, I explore how the politics of austerity is concealed through the practices of policy intermediaries learning from places elsewhere. Yet despite the cultural-political work to ‘take the politics out’ of ongoing reforms, I demonstrate how campaigners slowed down the local contracting of accountable care through repoliticising circulating policy as the ‘Americanization’ of the NHS. Rethinking the times and spaces of politics and policy in the present conjuncture, I conclude by warning of the dangers of nostalgia for the post-war British welfare state when pushing for universal healthcare as a right for all.
Temporary urban uses for children in the city: exploring post-pandemic urban futures for play

Michael Martin
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children has been severe and regionally disproportionate, inextricably affecting children’s opportunities for play, and in tandem, their mental/physical health and wellbeing. Recognising this, multiple cities internationally introduced temporary urban solutions for children to provide safe opportunities for urban play. Examples include, pop-up/DIY play spaces, the closure of car parks for trikes, bikes, rollerblading and skateboarding, the creation of school/play streets, and pop-up cycle lanes to promote children’s independent mobility. There is a well-developed research literature on temporary urban uses of space in response to crises, however, very little is known about i) temporary uses of land, buildings, and infrastructure for play and ii) children’s experiences of temporary public spaces more generally. Through comparative case studies, this paper explores four innovative interim urban uses for play that materialised during COVID-19 in Australia (Sydney), Europe (Milan, Paris) and the UK (Belfast). The analysis focuses critically on the neglected role of temporary public spaces for play, the long-term impact of innovative child-friendly adaptations to emerge in cities during COVID-19 and the active participation of children in planning/designing post-pandemic urban futures. The paper contributes to debates on the vital reconceptualisation of children as active agents in matters of urban design/planning and develops fresh insights on the role of temporary urbanism in realising playful cities. Initial findings emphasise how temporary solutions in response to a public health crisis may afford and invite children to be involved in placemaking in new and creative ways. However, it also highlights how projects for play are vulnerable to dislocation as crisis conditions abate and normalcy resumes. I reflect on the possibilities/role of children in reimaging urban futures for play and how children’s experiences and perspectives raise important questions on the meaning (and governance) of ‘recovery’ and resilience in cities following the pandemic.
Uncertainties, undeservingness and (self-)blame: ambiguities and complexities in the experiences of people ageing with HIV under austerity and covid-19

Cesare Di Feliciantonio
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Abstract

The current one is the first generation of people growing old with HIV, so their health outcomes and needs are often characterized by uncertainties and met by lack of knowledge and experience from service providers and practitioners. These uncertainties often generate tensions in the relationship between users and providers, these tensions heightened by the reduction of healthcare assistance and services available consequent to austerity, especially in those contexts characterized by the public provision of healthcare. With the Covid-19 pandemic, service delivery has often been halted and/or severely reduced, especially in those fields labelled as ‘underserving’ and ‘non priority’, such as sexual health. Building on ongoing research on ageing with HIV in three European countries (England, Italy and Spain) based on different research methods (biographic interviews and auto-driven photo elicitation with people ageing with HIV, interviews with service providers and NGOs representatives), the paper analyses the ambivalent and tense relationship between research participants and the welfare state (not limited to healthcare) in times of austerity and Covid-19. On one side, participants seem to incorporate narratives around ‘underservingness’, blaming themselves for relying on welfare provision in a time of ‘more urgent’ issues. On the other, their practices highlight a critical engagement with the lack of provision from formal welfare state institutions, leading to the creation of strong, informal, community-based forms of assistance and support.
Political responsibility and the contestation of unjust border systems

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Abstract

In this paper I consider the concepts of responsibility and accountability in relation to injustices that arise as a consequence of systems of border control. According to political philosopher Iris Marion Young, structural injustices are the circumstances that people suffer as ‘the outcome of the normal actions of a large number of agents’ (2003, p.3). For Young, structural injustice refers to circumstances that are not the result of any individual or collective intention, which makes it difficult for actors to feel responsible where there is no clear line of accountability between action and consequence. Young advances the concept of political responsibility to address the structural causes of injustice that are ‘normal and ongoing’ (p.11), and in which many people participate, by developing a forward-looking, shared responsibility that aims to hold ‘ourselves and others accountable for structural injustice’ (p.19).

Beginning from the assumption that many people tacitly accept the existence of borders through their normal and everyday actions, the types of injustice that affect people who cross borders at times of mass displacement are taken here to fall within the meaning of structural injustice developed by Young. Drawing from Young’s work, I reflect on why the voices of those who experience serious injustices arising from borders have transformative potential. Young acknowledges a need to understand the ‘socio-historical’ (p.6) conditions that shape injustice, as well as ‘the future effects’ of social structures beyond ‘the immediate purposes and intentions’ of specific actors (ibid.). I consider how to address the structural injustices of border systems and the significance of the lived experiences of people who are subject to border control, using my research on access to legal advice for refugees to discuss the demands of political responsibility.

References

On dangerous ground: a tale of hauntings, remappings and transgressions during lockdown walking.

Caroline Millar
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Abstract

As evolving tiers and ever deepening shades of red remapped our relationships to the outside world, as new street signage and strangely anti-social behaviours shaped where, when and how we walked, this paper will consider how the UK lockdowns transformed our relationship to place, the body and the map.

This paper considers walking as a form of haunting, a notion intensified during lockdown, as we trod and retrod the same routes in an attempt to flee the unending news cycle and escape our daily grind. Paralleling Daniel Defoe’s transformed relationship to the city in his semi-fictional account of the plague ‘A Journal of the Plague Year’ (1722), I will also consider how the pandemic remapped the topographies of the local and national, forging new mental maps, which will haunt us long after the pandemic has ended. And as the boundaries between public and private space blurred (with local golf courses turning into playgrounds) and ‘stay local’ dictates tested and transgressed, this paper will also reflect on trespass, defiance, joy and shame on the daily walk, during which our familiar geographies and ways of walking were rendered dangerous and strange.
Past, present and future of children’s play in Grangetown

Matluba Khan, Tom Smith, Neil Harris, Mhairi McVicar
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Abstract

This presentation will explore the potential for ‘play’, ‘place’ and ‘participation’ in co-creation of a ‘greener, fairer and stronger’ recovery strategy for a community in Cardiff as part of a civic mission project where we (university researchers) work closely with local authority and community organisations. The project is built on existing evidence on the importance of children’s engagement in creation of places for play (Khan et al., 2021) and their connection to nature (Dunkley & Smith, 2019) produced by the team and scholars in the field. In doing so we explore how the pandemic has affected the way children (8-11) and young people (12-17) play, hang out and spend time in their neighbourhoods with Grangetown and what children aspire to change or have in their local area to ‘build back better’. We do this through a series of workshops with children and young people where we (i) co-assess the neighbourhood quality through application of creative methods such as drawing, child led photo-walks and mapping and (ii) co-create a phased recovery strategy through drawing and model making. While we look at the existing state of children’s play at Grangetown neighbourhoods to strategize recovery plan for future, we explore the past and how ‘play’ was experienced by people who lived here or have been living here through revisiting their memory. We also intend to seek implementation and therefore ‘co-build’ one element from there. The final output will be a toolkit for local authorities which can be used in other local areas in and beyond Cardiff to co-create plans for child friendly communities with ‘play’ in their heart.
“It’s just a bunch of people having a laugh on a toy”: exploring girl skateboarders’ navigation of urban skate culture through play, practice and presence.

Michael Keenan, Carrie Paechter, Lyndsey Stoodley
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Abstract

A toy, an escape, a sacrifice, an ASBO... Skateboarding and skateboards evoke a range of connections and connotations for those who skate, and for those who do not. For those who do skate, and those who might like to, access is often unequal and contradicts narratives of skateboarding as inclusive and open to all. Buoyed by the pandemic and mainstream exposure generated through Olympic success, skateboarding in the UK has become increasingly popular, and is practiced by an increasingly diverse group of people. This growth has broadened and complicated skate cultures, with distinctive experiences emerging on streets, in parks and at competitions. For those who do not neatly fit the archetypal image of a skateboarder, that is, the young, athletic white male, the orders and borders imposed in skate spaces can be particularly difficult to identify, interpret and navigate. Many skateboarders, those who are new, and those who, for example, found themselves learning to push along their driveway or ollie in their back garden through the pandemic, have found the emergence into a wider skateboarding culture- with its established codes and conventions-challenging. This paper draws on extensive empirical research from skate spaces in Nottingham and Manchester, to explore the ways in which girls experience skateboarding in urban space. It does so through an analysis of their play, practice and presence. Focussing on the joys of skateboarding in space, and the tensions that exist between skateboarding as fun, and skateboarding as competition, the paper argues that the copresence of connection, challenge and opportunity are integral to prolonging presence, giving access to play and encouraging practice. Recommendations are made in relation to allyship and urban planning, along with suggested interventions for governing bodies and skatespace management.
‘Use of digital spaces for cosplay / dress up play activities in autistic children and young people for social interaction - combating related comorbidities of exclusion and isolation such as depression and anxiety, before and during the coronavirus pandemic’

Alice Leyman
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Abstract

The facilitation of digital spaces, in lieu of urban material spaces, for social interaction through computer gaming and other play activities has become particularly important to children in the wake of the 2020-21 Coronavirus pandemic, to combat – and perhaps recover from – the negative effects of physical lockdown restrictions.

Pre-pandemic, as a group, autistic children and young people may already experience exclusion from physical society, rural, urban otherwise, and may consequently already be isolated from current imposed normative societal groupings due to their neuro-difference, sensory sensitivities, communication comprehension, and social understanding. Physical exclusion is further compounded by a negative cascading effect on autistic children’s overall development as communication and interactional challenges will further inhibit opportunities to practice social skills (with efforts exasperated by and during COVID limitations to physical interaction).

Children and young people may already experience marginalisation and exclusion from material spaces due to challenges associated with autism and coping in social environments, therefore. Yet, ways are being sought to overcome social obstacles and create positive experiences, as an exploration into personally and independently chosen leisure activities by autistic youth to support social interaction has found, ways that could be useful to a diversity of children who experience exclusion.

A particular play practice, cosplay, and related companionable fandom activities are providing and creating digital and often physical spaces for autistic youth to be social. Thematic analysis of online content together with semi-structured interviews with autistic young people, and questionnaires completed by their stakeholders, have indicated a positive connection between cosplay practice, increased social activity (both online and in person) and reduced levels of anxiety and depression, with early findings suggesting transferrable elements that could inform more effective support for others with social and communication challenges or restrictions.
Children's politics of play: navigating the spatial politics in an asylum centre

Sandra Karlsson
Stockholm University, Sweden

Abstract

This study explores how children navigate institutional regulation at an asylum centre and how their political acts of resistance are expressed through their struggle to access play. It shows that the children used tactical awareness to identify the displayed strategies of the institutional regulation, which was conditional for their development of tactical acts, through which they handled that regulation. The children’s political acts of resistance and struggle for play, which were hidden to the institution, demonstrated how they claimed their right to play, although this right was still structurally denied.
Camping at home as a coping mechanism and potential means of recovery

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Abstract

The impact of the pandemic has not been experienced uniformly, but for many households everyday social life was profoundly impacted as work, education, childcare and leisure unavoidably became ‘physically intertwined’ (Sivan 2020) within the home. This blurring and renegotiation of boundaries was compounded by anxiety, loss, exhaustion and isolation as individuals were confined for extended periods of time with their significant others (Stodolska 2021). The mental health of children and young people has been particularly badly affected by the crisis with a marked rise in emotional symptoms, hyperactivity and/or inattention, and conduct problems (Waite et al. 2021).

In this paper, we draw on social media and survey data to focus on ‘camping at home’, an activity which surged in popularity amongst families with young children during the lockdown(s). Tents were erected in gardens or living rooms or homemade shelters were constructed on trampolines, creating playful sites of domestic microadventure indoors and out. Children camped alone, with their siblings, and with their parents and carers. The motivations to camp were multiple and included a desire to break the monotony of the lockdown, to have fun and create positive memories, and to escape the domestic confinement (both literally and/or imaginatively). Campers (and family members who witnessed the activity) reported numerous self-perceived health and wellbeing benefits (e.g. improved sleep, sense of calmness and relaxation, and feelings of being in control) and a positive impact on social relationships within the home (e.g. space to be alone, meaningful shared activity).

In so doing, we point to the value of playful microadventures, and suggest that post-pandemic, they might be a way for children and families to cope with, and recover from, stressful situations. They also highlight the importance of providing and ensuring equal access to safe open spaces adjacent to housing, particularly in high-density urban areas.
Playing, living, moving - and fearing? Families’ management of risk and safety through play (and) mobility

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the role of play in the everyday mobilities and risk management of families living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood in Sweden. Through the use of interview material from two ongoing qualitative research projects on families’ apartment living, and on everyday mobility, we analyse how families account for the organization of collective family mobilities in order to enable and support children’s play and movement. Departing from a relational understanding of mobility, the article contributes to research on children’s play and everyday mobilities by focusing on how these are enmeshed with collective family mobilities as well as entangled with the neighbourhood context. The findings show how family play outings to parks, playgrounds and commercial play centres are a way for families to handle risk as well as to do and display ‘togetherness’, through the creation of ‘safe family spaces’ on the move for children’s play and movement.
Play streets in the UK: Developing a class perspective

Alison Stenning
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Abstract

Whilst the contemporary ‘playing out’ movement in the UK is a relatively recent phenomenon, it has its roots in more historic play streets (or “street playgrounds”) from the early to mid-20th century, and engages potential futures around car-free and low-traffic neighbourhoods. Each of these incarnations of play streets connects to classed geographies of neighbours and neighbourhoods: historic play streets tended to be concentrated in working class neighbourhoods, marked out by poverty and poor housing, whereas ‘playing out’ has been critiqued as a middle-class movement, and these concerns flow into current debates about recent low-traffic interventions. Yet, the articulation between the space for play on streets and class is more complicated than this, and intersects with broader classed geographies of children and young people, their families (in particular, mothers), play, bodies, community, risk, “anti-social behaviour”, policing, public and private space, green space, the environment, transport, work, and much more. This paper will reflect on a series of recent and ongoing research projects with residents of all ages, practitioners, policy makers, and archives, and on everyday activism within the playing out movement, to develop a nuanced classed perspective on the multiple geographies of play streets in the UK. This analysis sets the foundation for further academic and activist work around the space for play in neighbourhoods which foregrounds questions of class and spatial justice.
Encounters with the Local Housing Authority: Life in Supported Accommodation in the East Midlands

Melissa Fielding
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Abstract

This paper explores women’s encounters with the local housing authority in the East Midlands. It draws from data collected during an extensive research period in supported accommodation between 2019 and 2021 and focuses specifically on the in-person encounters between those accessing state support and local state actors. I argue that these encounters are shaped by the ongoing aftermath of austerity and welfare reform and in the context of a reduced social housing stock. These relational encounters aim to assess both the ‘vulnerability’ and ‘worthiness’ of a potential social housing tenant and are part of the wider changing operation of the welfare state, one that seeks to ‘correct’ supposedly ‘risky’ behaviour. I argue that these encounters seek to shape the ‘ideal’ social housing tenant through conditionality practices, demanding certain behaviours are exhibited before social housing is accessed, as a way of allocating housing to the most ‘deserving’. I argue that these encounters have an affective experience on those trying to access social housing, impacting their emotional states as they try to meet the demands of the local housing authority.

This paper adds to empirical research on the changing welfare state in the aftermath of austerity, as well as theoretical work on governmentality and local statecraft. As part of my wider research project, I visually represent my data through pencil drawings, which were made at the time of research and from memory. These pencil drawings represent the day-to-day experience of living in temporary supported accommodation.
Translating climate change into weather reports - a speculation

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Abstract

In science, weather and climate are two different things. "Climate is what you expect, weather is what you get" is a way of speaking that distinguishes the two. Climate is abstract statistics, weather is a concrete experience. Methodologically, it is essential to keep the two separate. This is why people who claim to perceive climate change directly are always lectured on why this is impossible. This, however, obscures an important approach to the topic. For in everyday life, climate and weather are repeatedly linked when people claim to experience climate change because there is no snow, or because March of a year is an exceptionally dry month, or to classify extreme weather such as storms. This has led to the political question of 'why we disagree on climate change visibility' (Rudiak-Gould 2013, Hulme 2009 & 2016). Because the experience of weather is fundamental to people, I therefore pose the question of how the two views might be successfully brought into dialogue with each other. After all, if you want to talk more about global warming, you can use talking about weather as a way to access it. But understanding the specific weather patterns in a place requires climate knowledge. In my paper, I examine different formats of weather reports and weather apps - official and artistic such as the "New Weather TV" by Simone Fehlinger or the "Wind Map" by Viégas/Wattenberg - to see how they might become a relational account of climate.
Reduced social housing waiting list lengths as a result of local connection requirement? A case study of London

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Abstract

To apply for social housing in England, the potential applicants must satisfy specific criteria. Having a local connection with the application area is often an important criterion for social housing application. The Localism Act 2011 hands over greater power to the local authorities to determine their selection criteria for social housing application. However, the Act also made access to social housing more difficult for those without, or with limited, local connections. Since then, an increasing number of local authorities in London have introduced more stringent definitions of local connections. The increasing stringency is aligned with an overall trend in reduction in housing welfare provision in England.

At the same time, waiting list lengths decreased in many local authorities in London. Although there are existing reports which correlate a decline in the number of households on the waiting lists with the more stringent requirements on local connections, it is not clear whether the reduction could also be a result of other factors, such as an increase in housing stock and local authority efficiency. If the decline is caused by the more stringent requirement for a local connection, the negative consequence of such a phenomenon is that some unqualified applicants may become homeless. This paper uses a panel data regression to answer the research question of whether or not the increasing stringency of the requirements for local connections amongst London local authorities causes the decline in the number of households on the waiting lists. I used the data between 2011 and 2016 on all local authorities in London. The results suggest that the stricter local connection requirement is one of the factors that contributing to the reduction of the waiting list lengths. In this case, ‘austerity’ is wrapped in the political discourse of Localism Act and local connections.
Mounting violent borders and rising inequalities bring new global challenges and opportunities facing the enablement of migrant integration (Jones 2017). This paper brings to light differences in migrant access to urban resources across the socio-economic and ethnic profile of three major cities. By comparing migrant arrival and settlement in Stockholm, Berlin and London, the paper integrates spatial inequality and urban segregation, and shows how these affect migrant mobility and integration. Taken together, this is argued to have an impact on newly arriving people’s participation in diverse urban societies (Raco and Tasan-Kok 2019). The accelerated super-diversification of major European cities has shifted the political geographies of urban districts and neighbourhoods, their populations coming together or becoming polarised within patterns that are often underexplored (Legeby 2013). Cities do not merely serve as sites of acceptance of difference; they also hold the potential to host and improve migrant integration (Wessendorf and Phillimore 2019). Access to public transport networks, for example, is one of the many ways by which mobility can impact on issues such as segmenting populations, linking populations and creating opportunities for public encounter (Rokem and Vaughan 2019). The research suggests there is an urgent need to promote a more inclusive policy agenda which takes into account shifting urban geopolitical realities (Rokem and Boano 2018). The current moment being exceptionally critical with the Ukrainian refugee crisis placing larger European cities at the receiving forefront of a growing humanitarian crisis.
Scattering refugees across the country hinders rather than helps their settlement: The politics of integration through spatial dispersal

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Abstract

For the past thirty years, dispersing refugees that have been granted asylum throughout the national territory has been widely practiced across Western-European states. While such dispersal policies have far-reaching consequences for the life-opportunities of forced migrants, compared to work on refugees seeking or being refused asylum, dispersal of refugees granted asylum has recently not received much academic or societal attention. In this paper, we confront Western-European dispersal policies with insights from migration theory and practice. The rationale for dispersal policies is the prevention of spatial concentrations of ethnic groups, which is thought to hinder their integration (conceptualised as assimilation), and spreading the perceived socio-economic burden of refugees between local governments. However, within municipalities clustering still occurs in specific neighbourhoods. Furthermore, as other migrants, refugees prefer to settle in localities with access to labour and networks of people with a similar background. In many cases, secondary migration occurs, indicating a loss of time in the settlement process. We conclude that dispersal policies are a result of political discourse rather than theoretically or empirically informed. Allowing refugees to decide where they settle themselves does not just articulate their rights as citizens of their new country, but also allows them access to employment and social networks. Given the ongoing heated debates about the political responsibility for refugees seeking shelter in Europe, more insight in the politics of integration through spatial dispersal is urgent and relevant.
Translating critical zone, ecosystem, and socio-ecological research in eLTER-RI

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Abstract

This paper reports and reflects on research undertaken on the ‘Integrated European Long-Term Ecosystem, Critical Zone, and Socio-Ecological Research Infrastructure’ (eLTER-RI). Informed by interactional science and technology studies (Jasanoff, 2004), this sought to describe and compare approaches to knowledge in the critical zone, long-term ecological research and long-term socioecological research networks involved in eLTER-RI, to support a reflexive approach to a project that aims to develop eLTER-RI’s relations with scientific user communities. In connection with the theme, the paper seeks to explore the ecologies informing processes of ‘translation’ in the different networks and in eLTER-RI, and to be reflexive concerning the researchers own translational exercise.
Conceptualising Shadow care infrastructures: surviving, thriving and flourishing with a vulnerable welfare state

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Abstract

Economic restructuring and welfare reform in many cities of the global north, have forced marginalised people and those who care for them to invent new care infrastructures in response to reducing support from a vulnerable welfare state. In this emerging, yet incomplete, post-welfare urban landscape, marginalised people increasingly rely on informal care by friends, family, strangers and organisations to supplement inadequate state provision. Yet, as Minigione (1993) argues, the marginalisation of the urban poor is also “amplified by extensive deficiencies in social support institutions”, and by the tendency in urban societies towards individualism, estrangement, mobility and instability, as well as racial- and class-based hostilities which may hinder access to informal care. However, rather than the annihilation of care in the post-welfare city, in this paper we propose that care networks, resources, practices and ethics are reassembling in new hybrid forms which we term ‘shadow care infrastructures’. Activating a ‘shadow geographies’ tradition, it foregrounds care infrastructures that are necessary, but rarely visible within, welfare discourse. In the paper we consider whether and how ‘shadow care infrastructures’ - a wide range of formal and informal provisions of material and social supports - are emerging to fill the gaps, to enable survival, thriving and flourishing. We illustrate our discussion with reflections on our research in Sydney which maps shadow care infrastructures and the additional strains on these infrastructures caused by COVID19.
Questioning the ecologies and natures of environmental management, policy and planning

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Abstract

Nature is high on the global agenda. Yet despite abundant popularity as a topic of political and scientific deliberation, contemporary debates within global institutions dealing with environmental management underline a growing need to reconsider how nature is defined in practice. Much is taken for granted about nature, even in the applied sciences explicitly addressing its management. This poses a problem for current nature conservation efforts in the western world where grand international agendas for action are being built around a worrying multitude of conceptual discrepancies. We here review dominant discourses on nature and its ecologies within the applied research domains servicing global decision makers with environmental management advice. We conclude that competing perspectives on nature currently include: (1) A wilderness perspective highlighting the intrinsic ecological autonomy of nature as an authentic reference point for human otherness; (2) A rewilding perspective emphasising a protective yet proactive approach to nature through human re-establishment of non-human autonomous ecosystems; (3) A perspective on nature as living systems, focusing on ecosystem functionality, evaluating nature in terms of ecological health; (4) A utility perspective, focused on learning from nature and meeting it in mutual processes of functional adaptation; (5) A land administration perspective seeing nature as land units subsumed within the structuring of the social world. Based on an extensive review of science-advice literature we provide an overview of how these perspectives currently clash and converge within environmental management. We discuss how a more comprehensive and nuanced perspective emphasizing ecologies of nature may be approached.
Family Hubs and the vulnerability of Early Help welfare systems in austere times

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Abstract

Programmes of Early Intervention or Early Help that aim to promote ‘resilience’ amongst marginalised families and reduce future dependency upon state services have been advocated consistently in the UK, currently coinciding with a time of welfare retrenchment and restructuring. Many of the programmes and approaches being promoted prioritise a discourse of individual or familial responsibility and seek to deflect attention away from structural and environmental changes that have taken place. This paper explores Early Help child welfare services as relational care practices that have been reshaped through austerity, demonstrating the vulnerability of contemporary welfare systems rather. Drawing on the concept of ‘care ecology’ to conceptualise local authority Early Help services as ‘carescapes’, we focus specifically on the changing context of ‘Family Hubs’, and the fragmented nature of service provision. As with any ecosystem, care ecologies are constituted by interconnected and interdependent actors, processes, and systems. Damage to them produces unintended consequences which exacerbate underlying ‘vulnerabilities’. We explore this as a legacy of austerity, noting that this has resulted in forms of socio-spatial distancing from care provision for families, disrupting protective networks and support systems.
A feminist necropolitics: centring the body in staking claims to life

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Abstract

The politics and geographies of death and dying are rampant in the settler colonial context of Palestine. Mbembe’s (2003, 2019) contribution of necropolitics has pushed forward thinking around the power of life and death. Sharp focus has followed on the rationales, techniques and spectacles of killing and death from the top-down, which has cast aside Palestinians as hapless victims within Zionism’s war machine. As Danewid (2017) cautions in relation to migrant deaths in the Mediterranean, there also exists a replacement of colonial histories for the ethical abstraction of vulnerability, which resultantly shrugs off accountabilities and occludes the agency and resistances of those targeted with death. To define death as finality and the dead as absent is to ascribe to settler colonial logics of erasure. Thus, research that contends with the politics of the dead needs to position bodies as attached to living communities, their meaning assembled and negotiated by those communities in struggle.

Taking a relational approach to the geographies and politics of the dead and centring the body as a site of politics, this paper argues for a feminist necropolitics that positions the dead as central to staking political claims and reaffirming geographies of life. Guided by abolition geographies (Gilmore, 2007, 2017), I argue for a socio-spatial attentiveness that engages with the dead through expanding visibility and recognition to living communities. The dead body, rather than an immobile signifier of colonisation and loss, demands space in the political and informs the broader struggle for life and belonging in Palestine.
From the global to the planetary: Towards a critical framework of the planetary thinking in Geography

Oli Mould
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Abstract

With climate change and pandemics, the last few years has ushered in a planetary age. Moreover, the concept of the ‘global’ – a totalising and capitalist-centric concept – has become incapable of adequately accounting for the planetary events taking place. To date, geographical literature has used the term ‘planetary’ in important, but disparate ways; and in so doing, underplaying the emancipatory potential the concept has in resisting the totalising concept of the ‘global’. This paper looks to the wider humanities and social science to consider four ways – materiality, human as praxis, antinational and safeguarding – the planetary can be more coherently conceptualised geographically.
Human-nonhuman ecologies and the liveliness of coastal protection structures

Alex Arnall
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Abstract

In recent decades, coastal managers have emphasised the importance of accommodating the unruly sea rather than dominating it when responding to coastal erosion and flooding. In practice, this has often led to a rejection of hard defensive structures, like seawalls, in favour of nature-based measures centred on habitat restoration. In my presentation, I will look beyond this society-nature dualism to consider the implications of seeing coastal protection structures as socio-natural achievements that are part of a human-nonhuman ecology. Illustrated by a videoclip of a groyne construction project on a Maldivian shoreline, I will highlight the ways in which lively coastal defences actively participate in the social lives of small islands. As objects with their own unique material complexities, hard defence measures are deeply involved in the production of multi-natural island futures. Questioning society-nature dualisms in this manner opens up possibilities of speculative coastal and oceanic futures that do on foreclose inventive life.
The makeshift camp as ‘the field’: Navigating positionality, access and representation across informal geographies of refugee mobilities

Joanna Jordan
University of Bologna, Italy

Abstract

My research is on the informal geographies of refugee mobilities along the Balkan Route, with a particular focus on the makeshift camps that are established and occupied by refugees in bottleneck transit points in which their onward journeys towards intended destinations are blocked and interrupted. A crucial component of my research is the extensive, multi-sited and multi-scalar ethnographic field work which I am carrying out in the northwest region of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where refugees seeking to enter the European Union via Croatia are often compelled to make multiple, increasingly difficult, dangerous and protracted attempts at clandestine crossings – known colloquially by refugees and volunteer-activists as ‘the game’ – in between which, they reside in informally-established, settled and managed makeshift camps.

In this presentation, I aim to identify and interrogate some experiences and challenges that I have faced during (and after) my field work, broadly surrounding methodological questions of positionality, access and representation, with an emphasis on aspects that I feel are under-represented in the scholarship on my research area. Drawing upon my own research experiences and empirical context, I would like to discuss issues such as: gender, sexuality and clothing; safety, fear and personal boundaries; combining activism and research; doing covert research, subversive research; working in difficult conditions yet representing this without spectacularizing, essentializing or glorifying myself, my research subjects or the border-zone context. In participating in this session, I hope to share my (work-in-progress) research, receive constructive feedback and insights, and contribute to valuable discussions on emerging research in political geography.
A Javanese Anthropocene? Javanese Islam and the making of modern earth theory

Adam Bobbette
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

This paper argues for thinking of standard, orthodox, environmental sciences as translations of global traditions. The paper shows how Javanese geographical thought, including its spiritual geographies, shaped the modern western scientific understanding of the structure and history of the earth. The purpose of this move is to decentre the significance of western scientists in the formation of modern earth theories and place Javanese Islamic thought at its leading edge. The theory of plate tectonics, I argue, was not the product of white western scientists but complexly authored by Javanese Muslims making sense of Javanese volcanoes. Undertaking such a move raises complicated questions around how we conceive of agency and the authorship of environmental thought, the stories we tell about it, and what it means to inherit those traditions today. The move also enables us to contextualise environmental thought in much longer temporal trajectories than is conventional and draw it back to geographies that have often been considered peripheral.
‘Integration from Day One’ in Ireland and Scotland

Zoë O’Reilly\(^1\), Muireann Ní Raghallaigh\(^1\), Karen Smith\(^1\), Steve Kirkwood\(^2\)

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Abstract

This paper explores the principle of “integration from day one” in relation to refugee populations drawing on the Scottish and Irish contexts, with a particular focus on accommodation and reception arrangements. Despite the recognised importance of appropriate housing in shaping people’s experiences of integration, people seeking asylum in many countries in Europe, and beyond, continue to be housed in isolated, marginalised and very often congregated institutional settings while they wait for claims to be processed. In Ireland, the controversial "Direct Provision" (DP) system has ensured a situation of deliberate liminality for people seeking international protection since its inception in 1999, keeping people marginalised from mainstream society for long periods of time in overcrowded institutional accommodation, prevented from accessing employment and education. The Irish government has recently committed to dismantling DP by the end of 2024. The model which will replace it, as outlined in the government ‘White Paper’, names “integration from day one” as a key guiding principle, aiming to provide accommodation for people seeking protection in communities, and supporting and facilitating their integration into mainstream society from the moment of arrival. In Scotland, the principle of ‘integration from day one’ has been a cornerstone of the ‘New Scots’ Refugee Integration Strategy since 2014, and implicit in practice since well before this, despite being hindered by overall UK immigration and asylum policies. As Ireland moves towards this approach, this paper will explore what the realities and limitations are of implementing this principle in Scotland, and ask what Ireland might learn from the Scottish experience.
‘Platform politics’ in the European border regime: Intersecting political organisation and multi-scalar perspectives

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Abstract

Civil society and scholars alike associated the long summer of migration 2015 with hope for systemic change within the European border regime. Under the labels of Solidarity City and Safe Harbour city governments, activist collectives, sea rescue NGOs and engaged researchers seek to transform the European border regime altogether. This progressive movement has evolved out of numerous local attempts to re-imagine a Europe based on solidarity as well as to prototype and to implement subsequent changes under challenging and contradictory circumstances. In their attempts to establish migration policies based on human rights and in line with a pluralist society, different strategies inside, outside and against the state are being mobilised. Yet, the mere combination of these transformation strategies outlined by Wright (2010) will not suffice to transform the European border regime. New contributions to the theory of political organisation suggest that actors need to relate to a common struggle and establish reciprocal relations among each other. In my presentation, I’d like to introduce the concept of ‘platform politics’ as described by Nunes (2021) as analytical tool to uncover the ways in which progressive actors facilitate coordination and create collaborative spaces aiming at increasing their collective capacity to act. Intersecting these thoughts with multi-scalar approaches in geography (Brenner, 2019; Çağlar & Glick Schiller, 2018), I argue that the power of social movements derives from its spatio-political organisation that is diverse, reciprocal and balanced at the same time. My contribution aims at evoking discussions on the theoretical framework and the empirical findings.

Breaking the Cycle: Moving from colonisation to integration in modern day Aotearoa

Brittnee Leysen
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Abstract

There are many insights to be gained from looking at 19th century migration to Aotearoa New Zealand: how a sense of home and identity were established in a foreign landscape, how this impacted the indigenous population, and what acts of colonial violence came from this settler wave of migration. Using the namescape as a method of understanding resettlement and sense of belonging, this paper will consider how modern migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, are approaching placemaking differently in a modern Aotearoa. Having been victim to the colonial system, the people of Aotearoa show us how healing through a humanitarian approach to modern migration, including refugee and asylum-seekers, can be achieved in the modern era despite such a traumatic past. This paper will evaluate Land Information New Zealand’s approach to place-making, and place-naming, when balancing the goals of refugee resettlement on Crown land versus claims by iwi as a part of the Waitangi Tribunal. It will also look at how integration of refugees and asylum seekers is being approached in a way that does not aim for assimilation, but for integration of people from all backgrounds, races, and creeds, while actively countering colonial policies. Making a case for an increase to the refugee quota in Aotearoa, currently sitting at a cap of 1,500 refugees a year, this paper demonstrates that the capacity to expand the refugee resettlement scheme in Aotearoa can be done without harm to indigenous communities. Additionally, this scheme has many elements that can form the basis of a framework for other countries dealing with the challenge of integration in a colonised space, particularly its programmes for community engagement and medical protections for the most vulnerable.
The Logic of the Void: Translation, Indigeneity, and Islands in a Taiwanese Ecological Novel

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Abstract

*The Man with the Compound Eyes* (2013), by Taiwanese author Wu Ming-Yi, is a dystopian cli-fi novel that engages in ecological translation on multiple levels. Set on The Island (Taiwan), Wayo Wayo (Taiwan’s Austronesian Indigenous roots), and the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (real, present remnants of our global past), the story is rife with torrential rains, floods, typhoons, earthquakes, soil erosions, tunnel cave-ins. Yet Indigenous practices of relationality offer characters hope and healing, interrogating the scientist mythology of the logic of the void.

The paper is inspired by feminist philosopher and scientist Karen Barad, who denounces colonial epistemes based on Newtonian physics of the void that rationalize scientific applications of quantum field theory as “politically neutral”; by Indigenous Marshall Islands poet Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, who denounces “radioactive racism” premised on notions of Pacific islands as “empty” of life; and by Tongan and Fijian scholar Epeli Hau‘ofa, who says colonial mappings of the void must be replaced by an archipelago imagination rife with mobility, agency, and connection.

The Man ends with an underwater nuclear test which creates an earthquake activating a tsunami wave that sends the Trash Vortex hurling toward Wayo Wayo. The novel is hyperrealist rather than magical realism, as some have claimed. It does not lament the end of Indigeneity so much as make violent attempts to eradicate it visible, given that “matter is constitutently inseparable from the void” (Barad 2021). In this sense, Wu Ming-Yi’s novel makes visible sedimented histories of ecological interactions in fraught contexts of inter-imperiality.
Waiting as probation: Selecting self-disciplining asylum seekers by assessing ‘integration’ and time-management

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Abstract

This presentation is based on a paper in which we diagnose and critique a type of governmentality associated with waiting and assessments of ‘integration’ during protracted asylum appeal procedures by drawing upon data from ASYFAIR, our multi-methodological study of asylum adjudication in Europe.

Focusing on Austria, Germany and Italy, we explore the use of integration-related considerations in asylum appeal processes by looking at the ways in which these considerations permeate judges’ decision-making, mostly on the granting of national, non-EU harmonised protection statuses, as well as capturing the views of asylum appellants themselves through our interview data. Building on insights from the literature on conditional integration we question the implicit socio-political biases and moral assumptions that underpin this permeation. We show that the use of integration-related considerations in asylum appeals transforms migrant waiting into a period of probation during which rejected asylum seekers’ conducts are governed and tested in relation to the use of time. More than simply waiting patiently, rejected asylum seekers are expected to wait productively and ‘integrate’ into the host society, whereby productivity is assessed through the neoliberal imperatives of entrepreneurship, autonomy and self-improvement.

We thus contribute to discussions on ‘integration’ by looking at the assessment of migrants’ use of time, showing how time is capitalised by state authorities and used by asylum appellants themselves.
Imagining the Soviet Borderlands: Pasts, Space and Ideologies in Late Soviet City Symbols

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Abstract

Unlike the flags and coats of arms of Soviet and autonomous republics, described in their constitutions, there existed no legal framework for Soviet city symbols. Imperial coats of arms had been outlawed in 1918 and no provisions were made to create their Soviet replacements. In fact, despite many changes in the cultural sphere with the advance of De-Stalinization, Soviet visual symbolic space remained profoundly Stalinist. It consisted for the most part of monotonous totalizing repetition of the red Soviet flag and coat of arms as well as republican emblems that entirely or largely emulated the standard set by the USSR flag and emblem.

The wave of new city symbol adoptions that took over the Soviet Union in the 1960s was therefore a fairly controversial development. Locally created city symbols, whether adopted by city governments or designed and collected informally, were vehicles of bottom up De-Stalinization of Soviet (symbolic) space. These symbols appropriated local history and local space to represent local agendas that did not necessarily echo those fabricated at the ideological and political centre.

In my paper I explore borderland imaginaries produced and consumed locally. From the ideological and legal points of view Soviet town symbols operated in a grey zone where lack of regulation made it possible for local agencies to put forward local agendas through flexible use of formal power structures and creative reading of centrally produced ideology. In Western Soviet borderlands (the Baltic republics, Ukraine, Western Ukraine) such emblems often imagined a continuity with pre-Soviet local symbols. My paper examines Soviet period city symbols in former Finnish Karelia, formerly independent Lithuania, former Romanian Bukovina and former Polish Galicia to understand the power configurations that allowed local agendas to come forth in some of these regions and stifled symbolic appropriation in other Soviet borderlands.
“Good game”? Young people, violence and geopolitics in the ludic assemblages of Call of Duty: Warzone

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Abstract

This research will focus on young people who play Call of Duty: Warzone and other Battle Royale videogames, to understand how geopolitics emerges through co-productive, ‘everyday’ practices in ludic assemblages, and also to explore the effects of this on young people. Advancing emerging scholarship within the sub-discipline of popular geopolitics, this research will argue that processes of globalisation, such as technological improvements in online communications, have enabled the young people who play videogames, to ‘co-produce’ geopolitical assemblages. It will do this by recognising and engaging with young people as active ‘geopolitical agents’ to understand the ways in which they are involved in the co-production of ludic assemblages, through ‘everyday’, ‘violent’ and creative practices of videogaming. It will also attend to the social effects of engaging in these practices of geopolitical co-production that young people must then negotiate in their everyday lives. This work will be done via an innovative, qualitative, mixed methods approach going under the label of assemblage ethnography, using methods such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews to investigate how the young people who play Battle Royale videogames, co-produce and live geopolitics (Dittmer and Gray 2010). In doing so this research project will move away from the abstract, ‘textual’ focus of prior scholarship on how popular geopolitical discourse shapes the everyday, by instead attending to the ways in which young people are co-constitutive of the geopolitical assemblages that emerge in their everyday lives.
Lake Titicaca’s water governance and environmental democratization

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Abstract

My current research examines the governance of Lake Titicaca’s water pollution in Puno, Peru through the implementation of sewage water treatment plants (SWTP). Since the 1990s, Puno rural and urban communities that depend on Lake Titicaca have faced disproportionate and increasing vulnerability due to the intensification of pollution from Puno’s rapidly expanding and unplanned urban centers. Yet, despite an historically antagonistic state-rural civil society relationship that has deprived rural and urban communities of political power, Puno civil society environmental actors (CSEA) and state institutions have managed to join political efforts to address Lake Titicaca’s water pollution. In 2018, the Peruvian Central government’s implementation of SWTP for ten urban centers surrounding Lake Titicaca marked an unprecedented environmental and infrastructural development response. Considering this, my research seeks to understand how such ‘synergies’ - patterns and changes in the cooperative and democratic political practices of Puno rural CSEA and state institutions have led to the implementation of SWTP, and whether this in turn indicates greater rural and urban political empowerment, as well as the advancement of environmental democratization. The findings and insights from my research reveal that although key democratic political practices and spaces have proliferated in Puno, numerous social and political barriers still need to be addressed to advance environmental democratization and civil society’s empowerment. Given that globally similar urgent and complex water development scenarios exist, it is critical to understand how environmental democratization can strengthen rural and urban water governance capacities and the implementation of water pollution infrastructure.
Datification, Digitization and the Narration of Agriculture in Malawi: From Productivity Measures to Curated Folklore

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Abstract

Agricultural science (encompassing data, statistics, project documents and reports), and digital Indigenous folklore archives have an ostensibly tenuous but very important linkage for the Digital Environmental Humanities (DEH). A Digital Environmental Humanities (DEH) can offer more attentiveness to how the digitization of data sets reiterates inequalities but can also enables new narrations of people and place, and new articulations forms of power to emerge from the intimate scale of the farmed field to the ‘world stage’ of state agricultural reports. Deploying and utilizing this understanding, alongside Mbembe’s work on decolonial ‘Critique of Black Reason’ and empirical findings, auto-ethnographic data; this chapter paper discusses the data-rich how an ostensibly comprehensive and rich national agriculture monitoring and evaluation system of Malawi in counterpoint with an emerging digital archives program that centers on stories from a farming-centered culture, problematically encapsulates intriguing nuances. We discuss how datafication and digitization takes place in the operationalization of this system in the agro-based sub-Saharan African country of economy of Malawi, and the potential therein for a decolonialism.
The geopolitical ecology of conservation funding: Discourse and power in counter wildlife trafficking programmes in Peru

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Abstract

Illegal wildlife trade (IWT) has been often ignored in the Americas and the lack of government action has created a space for conservation organisations to lead the counter wildlife trafficking (CWT) agenda. Interest in South America means that previously uncommon conservation strategies are applied in the region, funded by international donors under discourses related to global security issues. Local priorities and narratives regarding the use of wildlife are now facing new CWT discourses, strategies and actors that have produced dire results elsewhere. The convergence between such strategies and local experiences, and its consequences, will elucidate the power donors and conservation organisations have in shaping relationships with nature and between stakeholders. This research analyses the use of discourses in the funding and implementation of conservation programmes against IWT in Peru, and how they interact with local knowledges and politics. Through a framework of geopolitical ecology, my research “follows the money” in order to analyse the discourses and power dynamics through which conservation policies and strategies mobilise and transform. There is a need for critical reflexivity from both conservation practitioners and donors about the discursive and material constraints that structure and drive conservation practice, such as priorities and requirements set by donors and policy mobility. A critical reflexivity of the narratives and practices mobilised in CWT programmes will allow the exploration of the geopolitical background of such strategies and to better shape pathways for a decolonial conservation in the Americas.
Exploring Relationships between Counterurbanisation and Rural Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

Counterurbanisation has been associated with new business start-up and increasing rural employment. However, the appeal of rural places as residential locations is largely overlooked within rural business policy. The paper reports on two phases of research, interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Firstly, data from 2012-2019 were analysed in an attempt to identify relationships between net internal migration and business start-up rates in rural Local Authorities of England. For the full working age population, we identified no strong correlation, but when broken down by age, increasing numbers of 25-39 year olds prove to be important drivers of rural entrepreneurship. By contrast, net in-migration in the age bracket 50-64 was negatively correlated with business start-up.

In an attempt to identify new and emerging trends concerning rural migration preferences, Rightmove data for 4 counties of England were acquired for the years 2015-2021. This dataset was analysed to investigate the types of properties and types of locations within rural areas that saw the greatest price increases. This research has identified a growing divide between desirable and less desirable rural destinations. The next step of the research is to align this to a range of local amenities that are considered to be attractive to entrepreneurs in order to develop a more localised understanding of the relationship between housing preferences and rural business starts.
Abstract

The Rural Planning in the 2020s project, funded by the Royal Town Planning Institute, explores how rural planning in the UK and Ireland affects communities and professional planners, and what it means to plan with communities in rural areas. Rural planning has different components and functions, such as public or statutory land-use planning, spatial or community-led plan-making, countryside management and environmental designations, all of which affect natural and social recovery in different ways. The project’s guiding question, “what does sustainable development look like in a rural context in the 2020s, and how does, can and should (land-use) planning help to deliver that?”, takes a critical approach to unpacking how rural planning is being shaped by some of the key challenges of our time, including climate change, Brexit and Covid-19, and how these impact rural communities’ capacities to realise more ‘sustainable’ futures. Inherent to this study is the extent to which issues facing rural planning in the UK and Ireland are unique and/or crosscutting in the way they shape the potential for planning to deliver innovative outcomes in rural areas. We explore the major constraints and opportunities to achieving this and take a comparative approach to how planning systems and rural configurations affect the notion of rurality, loss and deprivation, renewal and/or transformation through, or in spite, of the planning system. We reflect on the implications for different places, and what resources, tools and planning instruments and untapped potential we have to overcome the challenges facing rural communities today.
Community gardening and wellbeing: The understandings of organisers and their implications for gardening for health

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Abstract

Community gardening is increasingly framed and promoted as a way to foster healthful behaviours, as a wellbeing practice, and as a public health tool. This paper draws on interviews and ethnographic research with those who have been involved with community gardening in the North East of England. I focus on the people that organise these activities, who engage in translating and transforming the discourses and ideas about community gardening into places and practices that people can draw benefit from. For them, community gardening was, variously, an enactment of civic duty, a holistic and therapeutic practice, a radical social action, and a way to cohere and improve the life chances of local residents. The success and sustainability of gardening sites depended, in part, upon the skills, social capital, resources and experiences of organisers and local residents.

The experiences of the organisers resonate with an appreciation of the benefits of greenspace as not simply a matter of their containing of healthful behaviours, or of the passive inducing of relaxation. Rather, the joy, company, calm, purpose, and movement that community gardening engendered in participants was rooted in both the sociomaterial characteristics of practice and place, and their own attuning life experiences. Through considering the role of organisers, I reflect on research-in-progress of green space activities whose provider organisations are becoming integrated within social prescribing services.
Queer trajectories and the racialized politics of 'integration' in Finland

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Abstract

Critical research and activism have long highlighted how scholarly and societal approaches to the ‘integration’ of people who have migrated are often shaped by racializing assumptions and structures that both harm people who have migrated and also constrain critical analysis of what actually happens ‘after’ people arrive in a new place. Working in and from a Finnish context, this paper is part of a project seeking to develop a queer angle on the racialized politics of reception, encounter, and place-making that shape the post-migration trajectories of people and the spaces we/they traverse and inhabit. Understanding those trajectories, however, requires attention to a broader set of movements and circulations. This paper seeks to engage those broader circulations through developing a story of multiple, intersecting queer trajectories, including my own relatively comfortable migration from the United States to Finland as a queer researcher, early ‘data’ from research on queer spaces of reception in Finland, and an analysis of how globally circulating intellectual-political frameworks—from queer, trans, and anti-racist concepts to the transnational networks of racist and anti-trans/queer activists—transform as they travel and encounter an always already relationally constituted ‘local’ context in Finland.
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Yes, Dr Nyanzi, Cape Town is not Queer-yet

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Abstract

In Queering Cape Town’s posture as “Africa’s gay capital” Stella Nyanzi (2019:15) posits that Cape Town never advertised itself as queer city, but a gay city. Indeed, the city of Cape Town has been touted the Gay Capital in Africa. The constitutional protections afforded by the progressive South African constitution climaxes in an active NGO sector, colourful Pride Parades, a gay village, pink maps, gay leisure space and international acclaim for its LGBT-friendliness. Yet, the utopic freedoms this gay capital affords are predominantly enjoyed by white, middle-upper class consumerist gay persons. Nyanzi’s (2019) remark draws attention to words, such as queer in relation to ‘gay’, alerting us to the promise and reality of the words we individually and collectively mobilise around. Through a mix of in-depth interviews and autobiographical reflections, this paper challenges Cape Town’s Gay Capital status through illustrating how the colonial, racialised, classed and gendered dynamics of Cape Town permeate the spatial politics and experiences of varying racialised queer persons. Thereby, highlighting the production of queer politics that reflects messy, intersectional, constraining and enabling global, historical-local, and contemporary processes and practises of which a Gay capital simply cannot account for.
Still waiting? The lived experiences of refugees with Leave to Remain

Sarah Hughes
University of Northumbria, UK

Abstract

For many asylum-seekers in the UK, receiving Leave to Remain signals the end of a prolonged period of waiting. Leave to Remain signals a shift in legal classification from ‘asylum-seeker’ to ‘refugee’ and with this status comes the right to work, the possibility of family reunification and access to public benefits. However, when Leave to Remain is initially granted, an individual has only 28 days before their existing asylum support (housing, finance) terminates. Drawing on interviews with individuals who have recently received Leave to Remain, together with local authorities and civil society groups in the North of England, this paper explores how materials construct a tension between the official ending of an individual’s relationship to the UK asylum system and the persistence of the asylum system beyond these formal confines. These materials include the Biometric Residence Permit, eviction letters from government housing providers, the paperwork involved in setting up a bank account, and having to navigate the Universal Credit system online. This paper argues that through these materials, receiving Leave to Remain signals a new geography of forced migration, one that extends the asylum system beyond acceptance of a political claim.
Marching with Little Amal: Revisiting integration through its forms

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Abstract

Although integration is increasingly being recognised as a process, it is still predominantly measured and understood in terms of (un)succesful outcomes from the perspective of host societies. Viewing integration as a set of outcomes obfuscates not only the assumptions behind such integration outcomes, but also the politics and interactions between actors involved in performing integration, as well as the various forms of integration. In this paper we revisit two existing forms of integration (integration in policymaking and as it is performed before the law), and we identify three alternative forms of integration; namely integration through resistance, restorative integration and integration through art.

We approach integration in its various forms through Little Amal’s march on COP26; where the 3.5 metre child refugee marched along the Clyde with children from local school districts in their superhero capes to demand a better future from world leaders. Little Amal unsettles the logics and assumptions of integration as it exists in policymaking and before the law, while she also assists in us in making clear possible alternatives for how we view and do integrative work. Combined, Little Amal and the forms of integration that we discuss in this paper allow us to (i) locate the assumptions and blockages that hinder integration practice, (ii) determine means of approaching integration as an open-ended process and, (iii) consider how integration can be reimagined outwith the confines of neo-colonial orderings.
Neo-pragmatic Turn of the Turkish Urbanization Policy Under Regime Change

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Abstract

In the last two decades, the urbanization policy of Turkey has continuously moved away from transnational influences and reverted to more pragmatic, romantic, and conservative-nostalgia-induced practices. A nationalistic, pragmatic, and authoritarian intervention emerged with dire consequences, at each phase of the neoliberal transformation more hard-hitting than before. The consecutive attempts to use policy learning and participation as leverage gradually alienated policy intermediaries and strengthened neo-liberal interventions in the urban sphere. Recently, these interventions became part of a new centralization movement in the form of a regime change. The so-called “Turkish-style presidential regime” came with a new bundle of instruments and a policy narrative. The new Regime’s urbanization policy involves new concepts such as “horizontal urbanism” as an objective for lower density built environment, as well as generic types of public investments in the form of urban parks (Millet Bahçesi) and socio-cultural facilities (Millet Kıraathanesi), and a general urban development amnesty for all illegal constructions (imar barışı) all of which came out of a political black box as centralized remedies for the widespread discontent of the public with previous neoliberal phase. This new discourse could be understood as a neo-pragmatic instrumentalization of the results of the neoliberal transformation to foster further centralization. Although the Turkish State signed the Paris agreement and seems to follow international developments closely, it is evident that the government agencies broke off with a clearly defined comprehensive policy perspective. This paper aims to provide a descriptive account of this new type of policy-making/intervention based on the observations made on the recent developments.
The Blue Economy as a Strategy for Re-Imagining Post-Disaster Development in Grand Bahama

Emily Melvin
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Abstract

Although the term “Blue Economy” has emerged as a powerful paradigm for oceans governance, there remains little shared understanding globally and within the Caribbean about what the term means. In the Bahamas, the government has launched an aggressive campaign to expand the Blue Economy, targeting a variety of economic sectors for potential development. On Grand Bahama, which is still rebuilding from the dual stressors of Hurricane Dorian and border closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Blue Economy is seen as providing new opportunities for resilient development, yet the contours of that development project remain undefined. For example, a variety of proposed projects center around the shipping port in the Free Trade Zone, where licensed firms are granted the rights to import and export equipment and materials duty-free. At the same time, actors seek to create a new “tech hub” to promote ocean-based innovations, which are framed as aimed at achieving economic growth while also mitigating against climate change and environmental degradation. This paper will discuss preliminary findings regarding the way Blue Economy discourse is shaping spatial and economic imaginaries in Grand Bahama. It will also set forth a path forward for future research exploring what this means for allocation of ocean space and resources, as well as power relations among actors.
Bloody, hairy, and hormonal: an intimate geopolitics of Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)

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Abstract

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) is fundamentally a life-long, complex endocrine condition that affects the entire body but more commonly known for disrupting ovary function (Allahbadia and Merchant, 2011; Costello, 2021). In the UK, one in 10 people are diagnosed with PCOS (Verity, 2017), which disproportionately affects those from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities (Arlt and Thangaratinam, 2021). However despite its prevalence, geographers are yet to engage with PCOS. As feminist and intimate geopolitics continue to centre the body (Mountz, 2018; Smith 2020), this paper introduces my own Brown PCOS body as an important site of interest for political geography, providing novel insights into conceptual debates of territory and borders.

Drawing on auto-ethnographic research, I begin by building upon intimate geopolitics scholarship to explore how menstruation fits into conversations around the reproductive body and territory, to reveal the conflicting interests of menstrual blood expelled from the PCOS body. Turning to the physiological symptom of hirsutism, I use hair as a lens to think about the ways in which borders are socially constructed on my PCOS body, but also how violent bordering regimes are felt and embodied on the skin through hair removal practices. Finally, I delve below the epidermis to position the uterus as a fleshy site for territory making and consider how hormones as sub-human geopolitical actors become imbricated within this process. This paper concludes that political geographers are suitably placed to engage with PCOS (and menstrual health more widely), calling for more work to document these lived experiences.
Discourse and Policy Development: Haringey Development Vehicle as a Represented Problem

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Abstract

As a discourse itself, common sense understandings of social and public housing are in fact conditioned by a specific group of discursive relations that have been historically established and conditioned by neoliberal capitalism. Present investigations into public housing discourse generally do not concentrate on the relationship between discourse and policy development, taking as granted the social problems constructed by policy proposals. This article therefore seeks to extend the literature by using Bacchi’s What’s the problem represented to be? (WPR) discourse analysis method. WPR is used to critically investigate lodged assumptions, the construction of solvable social problems, and the development of particular policy approaches. An illustration of WPR analysis is women’s job training programs: here, the problem is represented as a lack of training rather than structural inequality. Already used across several other policy domains, WPR is in this paper applied to the Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV), a £2 billion joint venture explored by the Haringey Council, which was intended to regenerate significant portions of the Borough. WPR is used to uncover key rationalisations within the Council’s written documents. In doing so, I will touch on the following topics, among others: governmentality, neoliberal problematisations, territorial stigmatisation, and homeowning ideology. The paper thus seeks to explore the following questions:

- How did the HDV become seen as a ‘necessary’ policy, given that other (dis/similarly situated) Boroughs are moving ahead with alternative solutions?
- How does discourse actively influence policy developments?
- How did extant historical conditions play a role in this discourse?
- How can stakeholders resist hegemonic discourse?
Rethinking collaborative governance to enhance legitimacy co-production: The Melamchi River diversion for municipal use in Nepal

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Abstract

Governments often use water crises in rapidly growing cities to legitimate the extractive practice of interbasin drinking water transfer from rural areas. The benefits of water extraction are, for the most part, accrued in urban places where the raw water is processed in treatment plants to generate added value in the form of clean and safe water whilst resource dependent rural communities lose their land, houses, lifestyle and livelihoods. Although collaborative governance is touted as an effective mechanism to negotiate a fair share of resources and benefits, research evidence is equivocal on how the state and non-state stakeholders perceive the co-production of legitimacy. This research employs a lens of procedural and substantive legitimacy to examine collaborative water resource planning, development, and management within the context of the largest interbasin rural to urban water transfer for municipal use in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal’s national capital region with a population of over 2.5 m. Research findings suggest that the liberal idea of justice as a moral virtue in governing extractive industries through centralized economic planning or market regulations fails to appreciate the political nature of legitimacy arising from differences in beliefs and values between the state and non-state actors. This research concludes that an argumentative form of decision making can enhance legitimacy co-production, especially when the most affected rural communities are empowered to negotiate for welfare loss from water diversion.
Connecting research and policy with the Ocean Recovery Declaration.

Pamela Buchan
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Abstract

In this short talk, the Ocean Recovery Declaration will be used to demonstrate how primary marine and coastal research can be developed into policy which garners public support. The Ocean Recovery Declaration, or #Motion4TheOcean, was designed as a vehicle for marine citizenship, building on research which characterised marine citizenship rights as the right to participate in the transformation of the human-ocean relationship for sustainability. The Motion4TheOcean is aimed at local government and, through it, marine citizens can ask their local Councils to take action for Ocean Recovery. The model motion includes marine social and natural scientific evidence to inform national government asks and local government pledges, which bring together ocean literacy, marine citizenship, and marine experiences, and recognise and promote the importance of partnership and coastal communities for developing a sustainable blue economy. In this way, local political action can be used as a tool to embed research into policy and practice.
The role of consumers in protecting our oceans

Bernadette Clarke
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Abstract

Global fisheries face numerous pressures: overfishing of fish stocks linked to rising global demand for seafood; mismanagement; declining habitat status with implications for marine biodiversity; climate change; and pollution. The sustainable seafood movement evolved in response to these pressures, using market-based approaches such as seafood guides to influence consumer choices and increase the sustainability of the seafood supply chain.

Using the Marine Conservation Society’s (MCS’s) Good Fish Guide as a case study, this presentation highlights the results of an evaluation of UK public knowledge and use of seafood guides; their effectiveness in motivating sustainable seafood consumption; and their value as conservation and educational tools. Using a UK-wide questionnaire (n= 2409), this study provides valuable insight into public attitudes towards seafood, finding that respondents using the guide (29%, n=662) purchase more seafood and from a greater range of species. Guide users were also found to have more seafood sustainability knowledge than non-users.

As efforts to address the challenges facing the global ocean continue, this study emphasises the importance of sustainable seafood within that discourse. Crucially, the study explores the role of public consumption of seafood and makes a much needed contribution to the understanding of how seafood guides can be used as a mechanism to enhance ocean literacy, improve marine conservation and support ocean recovery.
Leaving and Lot: Geopoetics, Loss, and Settler Colonial Girlhood on Haida Gwaii

Sarah de Leeuw
UNBC, Canada

Abstract

Located in the highly narrativized geographies of Haida Gwaii, this creative poem-paper explores the impossibly of leaving parts of oneself (early girlhood) to specific times or places. The poem-paper charts, instead, how taking leave from one geography provides a creative and critical distancing that allows for new interrogations of white-settler supremacy. Anchored in growing and often intersectional feminist calls to politicize and critically emplace geography’s creative re/turn, including geopoetics, and drawn from a recent book of poetry entitled “Lot” (de Leeuw 2022), this poem-paper takes up poet and essayist M. Nourbese Philip’s cautionary that, when it comes to leaving, loss, and histories of colonial violence and contemporary states of coloniality, “There is no telling this story.” Phillip “deeply distrusts” the tool of language, noting that efforts to weave logic, sense, or linearity from the sheer senselessness of colonialism--and the wake of disaster and violence it leaves--is, always, an act at risk of “doing a second violence.” One answer? Feminist anticolonial geopoetic language that pushes against logic, predictability, or orderliness: expressions that, with reference to geographies of leaving, creatively refuse legibility or the comprehensible.
Seeing Like a Central Bank: Housing as a Channel for the Transmission of Monetary Policy

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Abstract

Central Banks have become an integral part of the housing crisis due to the effectiveness of interest rates in determining access to housing finance and as well as the ability to service household debt. As a result, the public has increasingly turned to central banks as the key institution for determining housing access, closely watching for signs of interest rate adjustments, associating these changes with the affordability of housing. Despite strong anecdotal evidence that the Central Bank’s policy decisions impact significantly on the housing market, banking officials remain adamant that housing affordability falls outside of their remit of low, stable inflation and financial stability. This is not to say that Central Banks are not interested in the dynamics of the housing market. It’s impact on the effectiveness of monetary policy and maintaining financial stability means that Central Banks produce research and publicly comment on the housing market – often pushing for solutions at a government level, changes to tax settings and to infrastructure and planning policy. Using the Reserve Bank of Australia as a case study, this paper examines housing from the perspective of the Central Bank – arguing that Central Bank’s expansionary monetary policy over the last twenty years oriented towards achieving its mandate of low and stable inflation has concurrently spurred the appreciation of housing as a financial asset. As a result, and because of the need for affordable and secure housing, everyday citizens have become enrolled in the logics of macroeconomic policy and especially the logics of asset speculation.
Money from the Margins: Commodity Every Urban Hydrosocial Relations Along ‘Ghats’ of Kolkata

Raina Ghosh
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Abstract

Under the neoliberal urban restructuring paradigm, postmodern urban spatiality has dictated the ‘look and feel of cities’ using culture as an appropriating tool to glorify cities and their riverbanks as ideal spaces for speculative capital. This study aims to unravel the nuances of the production of urban spaces along the River Hooghly in Kolkata, through various historically rooted, placemaking processes revolving around a range of characteristic ‘hydrosocial relations’ binding the city and the river. The history of the riverfront in Kolkata and particularly ‘ghats’ (locally, flight of steps leading down to the river) charts out the narrative of a political ecology of ‘land in making’ out of a muddy, aqueous landscape, obsessing over the grammar of urban design and order. Both in colonial and post-colonial registers, the cartographic logic of precise land-water binaries has compelled the State to posit a category of ‘produced nature’ in the form of a ‘riverfront’ to be used simultaneously as an object of spectacle and as a discarded margin for the city on the other.

The idea of valorising ordinary urban spaces, not only through the power of capital but also through the encasing of aspirational aesthetics of world-class city-making - superimposes a new spatial order upon the everyday vernacular rhythms of corporeal engagements with the city’s rivers. Therefore, Ghats here serve as the new optic to look into the process of commodification of everyday waterscapes in the margins of cities of Global South using a Lefebvrian triad of production of space working in a milieu of perceived, conceived and lived spaces. This paper argues that the two primary forces driving the contemporary city-making exercise include - firstly, the discursive and material production of certain ornamental spaces which I call the ‘embellished urban’ and secondly, a practical vocabulary of ‘riverside-property thinking’ backed by the State’s covert and overt role of a land-maker.
Priming for Amazon: Spatial Contestation and Narratives of Decline in the Rurban Fringes of the No-Longer-Industrial City

Joel Maddock-James
York St John University, UK

Abstract

By focusing on the ‘edgelands’ of deindustrialized terrains, this paper argues that mounting meaningful resistance to the commodification of space ought to encompass the contestation of spatial stories that accompany the urban morphology of place. When it comes to such environments, insistence on the language of ‘abandonment’ and ‘decay’ can compound the simplification of place into a resource for investment as it inevitably becomes tied up in the various ‘restructurings’ of ephemeral capitalist development and the ‘seesawing’ sequence of capital mobility. Often implicit in these narratives are post-anthropogenic characterisations of decline that seek to frame landscapes host to inoperative industrial sites as evidencing the “return of nature”, brought to being through the ‘invasion’ of a thriving plant life that festers in areas once occupied by activities that were the least bit natural in their formation. But whereas these accounts suggest an external and almost cyclical governance to the logic of development that imagine linear trajectories with marked end points, this paper argues for an open-ended approach to questions of deindustrialization that in so doing invites a re-politicization of the forces of decline found in ruinous terrains. That these sterile sites tend to fall by the wayside when it comes to spatial contestation suggests a need to afford them a level of consideration capable of reasserting a stake in the future of urban continuity in a political climate where sovereignty is increasingly surrendered to the spatial demands of platform infrastructures. In the post-Fordist epoch of mobilities-based growth and flexible accumulation, liminal zones of exurban character – with their cheap, plentiful lands that carry extremely low standards of design – provide fertile breeding ground for the fulfilment architectures of platforms like Amazon, who transform them into logistics hubs that stitch together socio-material networks to accelerate and smooth out commodity flows.
Place and Placelessness- The Intersection of Space, Displacement and Community

Suheel Rasool Mir
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Abstract

It is realistic to think that place no longer matters. Clarion calls such as the “Death of space” and the “Death of Distance” note the place-shattering effect of modern distance destroying technologies in a global world. Today, the waves of globalization and consumerism wash over social institutions of power and heavily influence individual choice. The force of neo-liberalism has impacted American community life by lowering people’s connectivity to particular community participation. When taking these global changes into consideration, it is hard to acknowledge that communities differ anymore from one another. Even rural places that were once thought of as symbols of traditional community have become increasingly tied to economic and cultural institutions of urban life, blending rural and urban life. Rural communities that have been agricultural/production industries are restructuring into markets of consumption to feed globalization by treating rural areas as amenities to be consumed. Migration from metropolitan areas to rural communities creates cultural changes, which occasionally clash with rural cultural interpretations of community, blurring the lines of rural and urban ways of life. More recently, highly rural areas also can feel these effects through out-migration and economic dependence on recreation or extraction. These results lead community scholars to suggest that community differences may now be replaced with cultural and economic uniformity. By privileging the human knowledge of place and placelessness through fundamental research, this study contests the compartmentalised usage in studies of displacement into exclusive categories such as ‘development-induced’ and ‘internal’ and ‘external’. In the contemporary global order that is characterised by extensive and rapid movements of people, there is a need to explore the multitude of interconnected factors causing displacements that compel people to move, within their homelands or across borders.
Public Land at the Intersection of Commodification and Decommodification: Cases of Mexico and Turkey

Özge Yüsekkaya
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Abstract

This paper analyzes the land governance processes in Mexico and Turkey. It is often argued that space is increasingly being commodified in the neoliberal era. While this is true, one should not overlook the simultaneous processes of decommodification. The present study aims to uncover these complex processes by centering its argument on the organization of land in these two countries in the neoliberal era, and how the transformation of land governance impacts citizens’ access to and use of land.

In the last thirty years, these two countries have undergone tremendous transformation regarding how they govern what may be broadly referred to as public land. In both countries, until the 1990s, land has been more or less organized to the benefit of the citizens. Since then, although some elements of this earlier tradition have been preserved, the land is now drawn more and more into market relations in various and even contradictory ways, ranging from privatizations to public-private partnerships (PPPs) and over to collectivization. For instance, in Mexico, we see that large scales of ejido land have been privatized in 1992 followed by displacement of indigenous people. While in Turkey privatization of the treasury land is common, it is also possible to witness urgent expropriations or PPPs for mega-projects or major investments in infrastructure, energy, construction, etc. There is also considerable decommodification going on as some people obtain ownership of property as a result of urban redevelopment projects. All of these processes have significant implications on whether and how the citizens access land.

This research is motivated by the understanding that these transformations are never unidirectional, involve multilayered processes, and hold together institutional logics, which might in fact be contradicting one another. Such a perspective would enable us to understand the variegated nature of neoliberalism.
Monitoring Mangrove Forest along the Colombian Pacific coast with Machine Learning and Satellite data

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Abstract

Coastal zones are dynamic and complex territories that offer ecosystem goods and services. For example, the Colombian Pacific coast has a significant percentage of mangrove coverage on the eastern coast of South America that hosts the strategic mangrove forest ecosystem that is part of a "biodiversity hotspot" (Chocó/Darién). In addition, these vegetation covers are widely known to be resistant to diverse climatic phenomena and are an essential part of the coastal population's economy. However, access to these territories is complex due to their location or social problems. Therefore, we used machine learning algorithms and a high volume of multitemporal spatial information between 2009 and 2019 to reduce the uncertainty of the mangrove ecosystem surface. Machine learning and satellite data (Landsat 5, 7, 8, and ALOS PALSAR/PALSAR2 with a spatial resolution of 30 and 25 m, respectively) were processed using the cloud-based geospatial platform Google Earth Engine (GEE). In 2019 of the four coastal departments that make up the Colombian Pacific, the results indicate that the largest area of mangrove cover is in Nariño (49.7%), followed by Valle del Cauca (20.7%), Chocó (19.4%), and Cauca (10.1%). This initiative seeks to generate an ecosystem-based integrated coastal management decision support system in Colombia.
The making of use and exchange value in the Liberties, Dublin: Vacancy, speculation, financialization

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Abstract

Work on the financialization of housing, land and real estate has sought to interrogate post-crisis trajectories and strategies of financial actors, which reconfigure property as a digital, abstract, and exchangeable commodity. As activist movements contest these trends (Fields, 2017), an important site of political antagonism has been the conflict between vacant land’s use and exchange values (Nic Lochlainn, 2021). In the post-crisis period, vacant land and property has become an increasingly politicised site of governmental intervention wherein state and non-state actors seek to shape urban development futures (O’Callaghan et al, 2018). However, while the “assetization” and mobilisation of vacant or “underused” “land banks” is a central dynamic within post-crisis financialization (Ward & Swyngedouw, 2018), understandings of the work that vacancy does in facilitating the commodification of urban land is underdeveloped. This paper responds to this problematic through an approach that brings vacant land’s use (temporary, marginal, and political) and exchange (as financial asset) values into conversation via an analysis of recent urban development trends in the Liberties, Dublin. The Liberties has undergone substantial, though uneven, gentrification over a number of decades (Kelly, 2014) and has recently been the site of struggles around the proliferation of new hotel, student accommodation and co-living developments. Focusing on detailed analysis of a small number of case study sites, the paper draws on stakeholder interviews, policy and media documents as well as company, land registry, planning permission, and property transaction data to map use and track exchange value within the Liberties across different stages of land speculation and development.
Can Environmental Plans Foster Community Stewardship Capacities: A Comprehensive Assessment of the Geography of Urban Green Infrastructure

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Abstract

Riparian lands, the interface between terrestrial and water ecologies, play a critical role in keeping ecosystems healthy. However, in Texas, rapidly sprawling metropolitan regions continue to urbanize environmentally vulnerable areas around rivers and streams, to meet the housing shortage needs, to expand regional transportation infrastructure, and to make the sprawling region more accessible for daily commutes. Fragmentation through land use changes, land cover changes, multi-ownership, and multi-use, further complicates urban riparian land management.

Many types of environmental plans are developed to address environmental management strategies. Within such plans, there is a growing trend of using nature-based and environmental stewardship-based projects as tools to protect, restore and manage riparian lands. A growing body of research shows that though these plans meet the environmental mitigation goals, they fail to address equity and justice, as economic growth is the driving force for the creation of such plans.

This paper aims to identify, describe, and categorize the relationship between environmental planning, environmental stewardship capacity, and equitable methods of preserving ecologically vulnerable urban riparian lands. In doing so we ask:

1. How do the public engagement policies within environmental plans strengthen or weaken multi-scalar environmental stewardship capacities?

2. What implicit social, ecological, and economic priorities can we detect in the distribution of the projects?

A comparative case study of two rapidly urbanizing and sprawling communities of Texas, Dallas, and Houston, were studied for policies and practices of riparian protection and restoration. We analyzed planning documents with relevance to riparian lands and synthesized spatial data on the environmental, ecological, and social context of the plans. We identified two broad trends of grey and green epistemology, influencing urban riparian management policies and practices. Within those trends, we categorized community engagement processes into a matrix informed by commoning theory.
When caring also means letting go. Spatialising networks of care to enable expanding practices of care.

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Universidad de Chile, Chile

Abstract

The precarious yet flexible and functional networks of care that are assembled under precarious territorial conditions in the Global South are key elements to prepare interdependent care relations to function. The reasons for building multiple networks that can operate simultaneously as well as effectively when needed are not just set up to solve specific situations, but are affectively built in order to prepare loved ones to let go when the time comes. Based on ethnographic work of mobile caring practices in various cities in Chile, we present the complex ways in which caretakers prepare themselves and their networks to leave caring relations. Leaving these relations involves realising that others can step in when necessary and recognising the possibility of replacement and other forms of caring in the future. In the absence of a formal public care system that supports matters of care including health, education, leisure, political participation among many others, spatial configurations and multiple caring networks become key elements to set up when thinking about the future. Based on a care approach to mobile spatial practices of care, the paper will explain the spatial network configurations that operate in the city of Santiago and the way caretakers use these networks to make sure affective care relations will take place one they are no longer capable of undertaking care work.
Evaluating Soft Skills: Socio-Spatial Sense-making and Technologies of the Self

Aditya Ray
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Abstract

According to several media and industry reports, each year millions of youths are joining India’s burgeoning knowledge economy, but without requisite ‘soft-skills’ for the future economy, impacting their own life-chances and self-worth.

However, definitions of 'soft-skills', also called 'people-skills', 'social-skills', 'interpersonal skills', themselves remain vague and unclear. Job advertisements most commonly list soft skills as – 'innovation, initiative, service orientation, (leveraging) diversity, communication, leadership, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities' - terms that are sufficiently subjective and open to interpretations (Matterson et al. 2016). In response to dis-junctures between the different definitions, meanings and interpretations of soft skills, one way to progress, is to systematically enumerate, categorize, and measure them through their various sub-components (ibid.). This techno-positivist approach assigns technical qualities to intangible skills. However, such an approach continues to reify the individual, and by extension their identity and ability within existing discursive structures and networks of power (whether historical, social, institutional). Furthermore, the ‘skilled-identity’ continues to be presented as permanently ‘out of reach’, and the self always as ‘imperfect’ in its comparison.

Such an approach fails to adequately capture transformative elements/ moments within individual skill-ing projects brought on by 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1981) through which individuals act upon themselves, in-spite of the elusive nature of ‘skilled-identity’, and not because of it. In other words, a ‘negative assessment of skills and skill-formation’ that considers what happens when identity does not fit into a box. This paper, combining reflections from diverse research projects with Indian youth, argues that conceptualization of soft-skills need to be enlarged, to capture how individuals manage and challenge demands on own identity - understanding (varieties of) socio-spatial sensemaking frames and anatmo-affective practices/ or behaviours that go beyond notions of neoliberal self-reponsibilization.
Intergenerational Artists and Digital Skill: Orientating Investments with Instagram

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Abstract

Visual artists are generating new styles of creative work alongside the rise of digital platforms in changing economies. Historically, artists have managed the precarity of their livelihoods strategically, however intergenerational responses to contemporary digital, urban environments show how this is being adapted through the development of new skills. Artists are cultivating digital skills in transitioning their ‘analogue’ outputs to be more shareable on screens; affirming their practice through informal digital networks of support and gaining a capacity to care for artist communities via the digital. Drawing from feminist geographies of the digital, micropolitical and affective approaches, I develop a digital-ethnographic approach to artists and cultural facilitators everyday working practices in Melbourne, including observation and interviews on the themes of creative work, social media platform Instagram, community and the city.

This paper argues that the impacts of technological innovation and changing forms of cultural production and consumption cannot simply be understood according to who has the ‘technical skills’ to manage digital technologies. Rather than presenting changes in working conditions as universally empowering or disempowering for artists, a focus on skills allows us to see how individual artists develop new ways to articulate, share and support their work. These artists cultivate skilled approaches to the digital as a necessary site of investment for those who work in and rely on contemporary visual cultures in Melbourne, across varied careers and values around what success in the arts looks like. The material, social, and economic disadvantage that many artists face in precarious landscapes can shift through embodied skills which foster livelihoods and capacities, affirm artists’ creative practice, and re-orient towards the local. This paper presents a geography of digital skill and the arts in Melbourne, towards understanding new patterns of work, as well as offering a gendered and generational perspective on work futures.
Outsiders to Japanese craft tradition: Food shokunin

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Abstract

Shokunin is the word for ‘artisan’ in the Japanese language. It is an ancient term that originally referred to people (nin/jin) in any occupation (shoku), but has since evolved to denote specifically craftworkers, that is, ‘skilled persons in a traditional art or handicraft industry...who earn their living by producing things using their acquired skills’, as the term is formally defined today.

Food artisans have historically belonged to the shokunin category in Japan, and makers of so-called traditional Japanese food (e.g. sushi, soba noodles, wagashi confectionery) in particular are referred to as shokunin, not chefs or cooks. Food shokunin, however, do not receive official recognition for their craft as their counterparts in other traditional arts and crafts (pottery, weaving, metalwork, etc.). While many shokunin have been named to the roster of ‘Living National Treasures’ or awarded the Order of Culture, Japan’s highest honour for cultural and scientific achievements, no food artisan has received either recognition to date. Neither has a food product nor maker been included in any of the national government’s extensive lists of designated or registered cultural properties (i.e. heritage) and their stakeholders, unlike hundreds of otherwise recognised crafts.

This paper examines the context behind food artisans’ exclusion from the general discourse of craft, including the legal framework, in Japan. The idea of food as craft is first delineated through a discussion of food shokunin skills and training. The main reasons for the omission of food shokunin from craft discourse are then considered, which involve historical, elitist, and ambiguous attitudes towards food as a legitimate cultural form, as well as the inherent but transient properties of food as a craft product. The consequences of such attitudes are examined, especially in relation to traditional skills transmission and the social standing of food artisans within and also outside Japan.
Teaching ‘professional skills' in environment and development

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Abstract

This presentation comprises reflections on a pedagogical exercise teaching Masters students ‘professional skills in environment and development’. This PGT course aims to impart technical competencies, such as the use of development tools like ‘Theories of Change’ (ToC). It does so by bringing in practitioners to teach students, and through a group assessment where students submit a mock project proposal, which includes, amongst other things, a ToC. It also explicitly engages with so-called ‘soft skills’, such as collaboration, humility and respect, as well as key academic skills like critical thinking and deep listening. These skills are promoted through class discussions around topics such as racism and decolonisation within the environment/development sector, and are assessed (in part) through an individual written assignment. This assessment asks students to reflect on what ‘professional skills in environment and development’ means to them personally, involving them reflecting on their engagements with visiting practitioners in class, as well as their own experiences, positionalities and politics. This paper is an attempt to explore whether such a pedagogical exercise and environment can meaningfully engage with ‘skills’ beyond as technical capabilities, and rather as practices and attitudes that may play a role in the transformation of social and environmental worlds.
Theorizing Skills for Sustainable Futures

Trent Brown
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Abstract

How do we cope with unviable futures? In this paper, I bring together the ideas of Heidegger and Dreyfus on ‘skilful coping’ with those of Laclau and Mouffe on ‘dislocation’ to develop a theory on the emergence of skills for sustainability and their corresponding ontologies. Laclau and Mouffe’s concept of ‘dislocation’ implies the taken-for-grantedness of dominant discourses is always ontologically incomplete, as they are dislodged by alternative discourses that are external to them. This constitutive openness of the discursive field enables analysis of the emergence of new discourses from within the shell of the old. Yet, drawing on Heideggerian perspectives, I contend that a more meaningful way in which ontologies are dislodged is not at the level of discourse (if discourse is assumed to pertain to dominant ways of talking about social reality) but to the everyday coping of dasein – its (often implicit) orientations towards the future, its modalities of skilfully ‘getting on with things.’ To illustrate my argument, I draw on examples of aspiring organic farmers from my research in India. I show how disruptions to their everyday skilled practices – most often in the form of family health or economic crises – prompted new ways of interpreting their situation and the formation of new skills in alternative forms of agricultural practice. New skills ultimately lead to new ways of engaging with and experiencing the world and new value structures – in effect, new ontologies. I conclude by reflecting on the value of bringing everyday skilful coping to the centre of debates on sustainable transitions.
Tree-cutting, Criminalisation of Skills and Social Relations in a Central Indian Tribal Community

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Abstract

This paper investigates the embodied experiences of workers and their families as they navigate disruptions to everyday life caused by job loss and the criminalisation of their skill. Based on 8 months of qualitative research in an informal settlement in the Central Indian city of Nagpur - Anewari, this study focuses on how disruptions in skills and jobs impact social relations in a closed indigenous community where inhabitants work as tree-cutters. Tree-cutting in Nagpur has become increasingly criminalised in the last five years due to environmental legislation and stigmatised by increased climate activism. As such, men in Anewari are forced to leave the skill they have been practicing for generations – tree-cutting – and transfer into other labour jobs, such as construction work.

By focusing on how young men deal with these disruptions, and how these changes impact their relationships amongst peers, family, and community, this paper foregrounds relational and social transformation processes. For example, by transferring into other labour jobs, young men challenge community hierarchies and social norms, which highly value the continuation of the tree-cutting skill over generations. Participants often reflected on their relational and embodied experiences of these transformations in their social worlds, including stress and anxiety. As such, this paper contributes to literature and discussions highlighting the socio-cultural dimensions of skills. In particular, by unpacking the ways in which the loss and criminalisation of skills play an essential role in transforming social worlds, I argue that skills are experienced in a relational, social and embodied way.
Knowing to grow: Re-valuing horticulture’s skilled work and workers

Hannah Pitt
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

Skills are an essential dimension of food systems and their sustainability, but current production is vulnerable due to shortages of know-how. Problems facing horticulture - the most labour intensive form of agriculture in Minority World countries – have been brought into relief by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and of Brexit in the UK. These events have pushed actors to promote horticultural labour as valuable skilled work, countering a long history of its portrayal as unskilled (Klocker et al 2019). In this paper I share empirical work on horticulture in the UK and the sector’s vulnerabilities in relation to skills. Case studies show how varying scales of grower enterprise and their workers are disempowered, so capital is required to buy solutions. The roots of the problem are traced through the industrialisation and commodification of fresh produce, whilst recognising that skilled work involving plants and other nonhumans presents particular challenges. These issues are viewed through a theoretical lens which develops Ingold’s ecological interpretations of skill and skilled work, through attention to power and political contexts of knowledge exchange (Pitt 2021). I argue that understanding skills as know-how plus the power to act, means knowledge systems cannot be enhanced without collective action which promotes food justice and ‘knowledge as commons’.
Disaster Trade: The Hidden Footprint of UK Production Overseas

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Abstract

International trade and material mobility are both growing aspects of the global economy. Global material use has tripled since the 1980s, with global consumption of raw materials forecast to double again by 2050 (UNEP, 2016). As the globalisation of production and consumption continues to deepen, a third of this material volume is now traded across international borders. As international commodity trade is becoming the mainstay of many of the world’s economies, more and more of the world’s material matter is being extracted, packed into containers and mobilised between nations than ever before.

Amidst all of this dynamism, the influence of climatic instability is becoming increasingly tangible. Mirroring trends in material mobility, recorded disasters such as floods, droughts and landslides have tripled since the 1980s, with climate change-linked hazards becoming more common and more intense. These two processes have generally been viewed as running in parallel, connected by the indirect mechanism of carbon emissions, but not linked in the more immediate sense of how, when and where disasters manifest. This paper explores how the economy shapes disaster in our globalising world.
Building ‘soft’ skills for urban energy transitions: Air-conditioning contractors and knowledge networks

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Abstract

In commercial buildings, Heating, Ventilation, Air-conditioning & Refrigeration (HVAC&R) systems are typically the largest end use of energy. This paper explores the lived experiences of ‘fridgies’ – skilled contractors who are responsible for the maintenance, repair and upgrade of HVAC&R systems. Holding responsibility for managing and maintaining energy-intensive HVAC&R systems, fridgies are a crucial part of the energy workforce at the frontline of addressing Australia global climate change commitments in the built environment and delivering future urban energy transitions. Yet they are a largely invisible and unheralded workforce.

This paper draws on insights gained through a two-year interdisciplinary project delivered in partnership with the Australian government and HVAC&R industry organisations. The research deployed an interdisciplinary mixed-method approach, generating a suite of qualitative and quantitative data, enabling a holistic view of skills and training pathways for skilled contractors. In this paper, we look to the careful and strategic work of fridgies involved in the repair, maintenance and management on HVAC&R systems in commercial buildings, documenting the technical diverse skills required to deliver upgrade and maintenance work for improved energy efficiency. However, developing the skills necessary for future energy transitions requires attention beyond technical competencies. In this paper, we emphasise the role social relations and informal knowledge sharing networks play in the acquisition, deployment and transfer of these skills. While this, we argue, is critical to delivering future urban energy transitions, such skills are continuously overlooked in multiple policy domains including those focused on climate, employment, and the built environment.
Smart city development and socio-spatial justice in India: implications and agenda for research

Tooran Alizadeh, Deepti Prasad
The University of Sydney, Australia

Abstract

Smart city development – commonly described as applying advanced technologies in urban settings and local governance – is proliferating worldwide, especially during the COVID pandemic. Governments worldwide have expedited their smart city investments on smart projects (e.g. the COVID data dashboards) and initiatives that boost the pandemic-hit economies (James et al., 2020). However, with some of the worst pandemic-hit nations in the Global South (e.g. India and Brazil), such urgency is deepening the North-South divide in smart city research. By underscoring this research gap, we, the authors – two women from the Global South – set an agenda for research focusing on smart city development in India, with two purposes. The first is to unpack a distinct concept of Southern smart urbanism as part of a more extensive effort to call out the Euro-American centric notion of urban studies; and understand more richly the differentially reworking conceptions for cities in the South (Roy, 2011) - with a focus on a nation that is home to about 30% of the Global South population. Second, we focus on the socio-spatial justice implications of smart city development in contested geographies, adopting the ‘right to the city’ approach (Harvey, 2008) through scrutinising how smart city planning and implementation impact different sectors of the society. We present that the global COVID crisis is a crucial nexus through which smart city development is consolidated, expedited, and elevated. In conclusion, we propose a theoretical contribution to the ‘right to the city in the Global South’ (Samara et al., 2013).

References:


The materiality of “smart exclusion”: Innovative displacement and the politics of parking in Beijing

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Abstract

In recent years, Beijing has been witnessing an intense campaign for expelling so-called “low-end” migrant workers and a recent project of lowering population density in the city centre. How is this large-scale project of displacement possible with limited social unrest? This paper explores one of the latest imperatives – on inner city parking – of Beijing Municipal Government to uncover the microphysics of this state campaign of displacement. Two key aspects of this process are explored with a case study of Desheng sub-district in the city centre. First, it turns out that the use of digital/ smart infrastructures, such as using electronic eyes and RFID technology for charging parking fees, marks a new manoeuvre of the state in concealing its exclusive urban policies with value-free technologies, which contributes significantly to consolidating its logics of surveillance towards socio-spatial exclusion. Second, this strategy of infrastructural violence is also armoured by other long-lasting techniques of socio-spatial ordering, such as the hukou system. In Desheng, “local” residents (with local hukou) are offered a preferential rate, as low as 3% of the normal one. The combination of new and smart techniques and institutional legacies defines the governmental basis of “smart exclusion” in the context of China’s authoritarian urbanism, and it also reveals how and how far re-ordering the urban population has been foregrounded in the state’s urban agenda. The articulation between the state and digital infrastructures is hence pivotal in our interrogations of displacement and its socio-spatial-material mechanisms.
Love, Loss and the City: Emotional Geographies of Break-Up

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Abstract

This paper engages with the emotional geographies of heart-breaks and focuses on how breaking-up from a relationship has spatial manifestations. What happens when we experience a break-up? How are space and place central to its unfolding? The emotional labor of break-up has strong connections with place-making or disowning the attachment from a previously valued place. The focus of this paper is the post-love phase and explores relationships between people, place and love, break-up and its attachments to place and objects. In romantic relationships, partners investing emotionally with each other simultaneously get involved in everyday place-making. Partners bring specific places in relation to the process of exploring each other- markets, cafes, essential stores, public parks, cinema halls, monuments, restaurants, malls, particular corner of streets, a specific bench in the garden to name a few. Particular meanings are attached to and togetherness celebrated through such spaces. As such, a break-up with each other also means a break-up with the places that were co-produced during their time. These spaces are reminiscence of the romantic past and often haunt their emotional peace in the post break-up period bringing in various strategies of coping. This paper will document such place-making and disowning/loss of places once practiced in everyday urban life through the act of togetherness. The paper is based on auto-ethnographic data generated through the experience of both authors in the city of Delhi and Singapore.
“Being an outside mum”: Diagramming the time-geographies of women walking with babies

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Abstract

Though walking with a baby as a mother may seem mundane, it is an emotionally and logistically complex practice (Clement and Waitt, 2018) further compounded during the lockdown restrictions in Manchester, UK through 2020/2021. This project, inspired by time-geography (Hägerstrand, 1982) as method, examines how diagramming in comic book form (Carruthers Thomas, 2018) might facilitate a more substantive understanding of walking as a distinctive, spatiotemporal experience of mothering. Feminist geographers argue that applications of time-geography do not account for embodied gendered power relations in space (Rose, 1993). Drawing on interviews with women who walked with their babies during the pandemic as well as autoethnographic diaries and images of the presenters own walking experiences, the aim is to not only use the comic book form as a user-friendly method of research dissemination but also as methodology particularly to experiment with sequence, simultaneity, and subjectivities (Kuttner, Weaver-Hightower and Sousanis, 2021) to examine the gendered spatio-temporal relations revealed through leisure and walking practices for mothers.
‘No, I don’t want IT!’: Indian Information Technology Workers’ Present Dreams of Alternative Futures

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Abstract

The Indian information technology industry is an aspirational destination for many young people, who strive for socio-economic mobility by chasing the ‘IT dream’ (Nisbett 2013). Yet, once entry has been secured, the realities of working in a profession characterised by long working hours, periodic mass layoffs, and limited avenues for collective action present new challenges for IT employees. Based on qualitative research conducted in and around the IT industry in the South Indian city of Chennai, I argue that for many IT workers, ‘leaving’ becomes their new dream, allowing them to navigate work that is demanding, stressful and unpredictable. I demonstrate how the heightened sense of precarity that has become an increasingly ubiquitous feature of working in the industry, and that drives the desire to leave, is not merely a situated phenomenon, but is deeply intertwined with the structures of the transnational economy. I also pay particular attention to the experiences of women in this paper, drawing from their articulations to propose ‘heaviness’ as a conceptual framework for understanding the urge to leave work that is difficult and unsatisfying. I argue that dreams of leaving the industry and of a future beyond IT work allow employees to reconcile with the present uncertainties of their neoliberal landscape.
Young people at Europe's margins: Making an intimate geopolitics of the future in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

As the "return of geopolitics" asserts itself forcefully as a key characteristic of the 2020s, the western Balkans have also returned to the fore as the next front of contestation over Europe's future. But on the ground in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the subjects of geopolitics experience them rather differently. Rather than understand themselves as the victims of malign political influences or a hotspot for potential future conflict, young Bosnians and Herzegovinians increasingly understand their fate in and through their own bodily movements, and in particular the possibilities for migration to more economically prosperous parts of Europe. In this paper, I mobilize a feminist geopolitics to show how emigration from Bosnia is made possible, beginning at the level of the body. I highlight how European peace-building interventions have worked to depoliticize the future in Bosnia, driving out hundreds of thousands of young people who are taught to imagine a future replete with "European values" and subsequently offered only marginality to the European project. I argue that reframing 'leaving', 'imagination,' and 'desire' as geopolitically entangled, as feminist political geographers have done, can help us see beyond our own limited temporal positioning and show the dramatic political shifts that are enacted by and through the body.
Monstrous modalities: Conceptualising transness in transit

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Abstract

For trans people, the body is a site of departure and returning, embodiment and refusal, vulnerability and power that shifts across spaces and temporalities. This paper takes up transness – trans bodies, identities, experiences – as a modality (Stryker 2008) to reflect on the transit of affect and power attached to trans subjects, and disturb the taken-for-granted attachment of transness to sexuality by encouraging critical analyses of imperialism, race and racism, colonialism and disability. Using this theoretical framework, I employ a geographical analysis of monstrosity, a generative concept from trans studies and queer/trans of colour critique that theorises the cultural and legal construction of trans and racialised bodies and subjects as terrorising, disturbing, and palpably inhuman. The experience of being made monstrous emphasises the complexity of physiology, memory, and feeling in conversation with the social, institutional and temporal structures that inform how space is gendered and racialised. In order to understand transness in transit, this paper presents a conceptual argument for geographical attention to when and how certain trans subjects are made monstrous and how this speaks to the spatial and scalar dialogues between race, imperialism, and trans normativity.
The ancestral Maltese coastline as a contemporary exhibit

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Abstract

Within the geographical scenario of the Maltese Islands, the term ‘imaginaries’ is hardly used but its significance permeates the strata of spatial explanation and understanding at all socio-economic and educational levels. As quoted by Howie and Lewis (2014) the introduction by Gregory in his Geographical Imaginations (1994) pluralized ‘imagination’ by coupling together the discipline’s work to the geographer’s world of work. Said (1978) in Orientalism insisted that ‘geographical imaginations’ must provide its own materiality and thus structure further studies and uses in building its own aura of spatial and cultural ambience. In Malta these imaginaries are linked to the portrayal of events with historic representations of the Maltese coastline mainly falling into three categories.

The first is intrinsically linked as a tourist attraction using past epic events such as wars to promote the history of the islands. Secondly primary economic activities such as the production of salt and fishing aimed at showing how the traditional pre-industrial scenarios utilized the geographies of the coast. Thirdly, the architecture, scope and spatial extent of the fortifications, especially those surrounding the harbours, are portrayed in their colossal splendor from sea level and as a labyrinthine and intricate network of facades from the land and from within the structures themselves.

This presentation showcases the contemporary use of these traditional facets that link the geography of the terrestrial part of the islands with the maritime areas surrounding them both offshore and also within the creeks and bays of the embayed parts of the coast. By using sources such as late 19th and early 20th century monochrome photographs and linking them to Ordnance Survey maps, charts and sketches, prepared mainly by British surveyors, hydrographers and cartographers, and latching these to tangible modes of representation such as outdoor activities and museums, the paper aims to emphasize the contemporary use and management of old cultural traditions and sites.
“Rules are rules!”: The administrative logics of necessity and automation within the Home Office

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Abstract

In Essays in Understanding, Arendt devotes a chapter to analysing Kafka’s famous novel, The Trial. The Trial is the story of a man named Josef K. caught up in a bureaucratic system so senseless and defeating, it becomes like a nightmare. The novel, written in the early 1900s was widely interpreted as a terrifying forecast of the world to come. For as Arendt notes, to the public of the 1920s, ‘bureaucracy did not seem an evil great enough to explain the horror and terror expressed’ in the text. But for Arendt, the story had an uncomfortable yet poignant message for contemporary society; this novel was not simply prophetic, instead unveiling the world as it was evolving. Rather than consigning the Byzantine nightmare in which K. found himself to the realms of fiction, or a distorted parody of the world to come, Arendt grasped how bureaucracy had become the means through which mechanisms of violence can be both imposed and obscured.

Arendt’s political theory of bureaucracy has been largely overlooked within the asylum discourse, yet has continued relevance for analysing contemporary political structures of governance and the administrative logics through which they operate. Drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork at a Home Office reporting centre and interviews with asylum-seekers, in this paper I argue that notions of neutrality and rationality, as the ‘axiom of bureaucratic ethics’ (Berger 1973:52), are at odds with the repeated experiences of those seeking asylum in Britain. The ongoing war in Ukraine is further revealing the barriers to seeking asylum, a system operating through highly schematised and blinkered processes, characterised through a behavioural adherence to rules above all else. As the former Minister for Immigration at the Home Office recently stated regarding visa processing issues for Ukrainians, “a system that’s so used to saying no, is suddenly now being told to say yes”. These words highlight how anti-immigrant sentiment is deeply institutionalised within the Home Office, revealing a discord in how these systems are supposed to approach people seeking protection and the restrictive border regimes constitutive of their normal functioning (Abdelhady et al. 2021; Lindberg 2021).
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Landscapes of Loss: Wild Birds and the Geography of Environmental Crisis in Britain and the USA, 1956-70

Sean Nixon
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Abstract

Published in the USA in the autumn of 1962, Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring has become seen as one of the founding texts of contemporary environmentalism. While much of the impact of the book stemmed from its claims about the potential effects of insecticides upon human health, it was Carson’s account of the consequences for bird populations of the intensive spraying of forests, agricultural land and suburban streets that not only bequeathed the book its title, but also strikingly dramatized the pressing dangers of post-war agricultural practice to the intricate ‘web of life’.

In this paper I explore the impact of Silent Spring in the USA and Britain, placing it within the wider debate amongst bird conservation organisations, conservation-minded scientists and policy makers about the scale and pace of environmental change and the consequences of this for wild birds. To this end, the paper reflects on the way Carson, the National Audubon Society, British Trust for Ornithology and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds helped to make visible and legible the new threats to birdlife from toxic chemicals.

In drawing out the international dimensions of the ‘toxins crisis’ and its effects on wild birds, the paper also seeks to show how the crisis played out in different ways in Britain and America. Not only were the policies of the USA Department of Agriculture and other State bodies different from those pursued by MAFF and statutory agencies in the UK, but the avifauna and geography of the USA was also different from that of the UK. The paper draws out the different landscapes and spaces in the USA and Britain through which the environmental crisis and its effects upon wild birds was played out.
On life support or supporting life? Counter wounding and care-as-politics in the Gaza Strip

Craig Jones
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Abstract

This paper examines the geographies of healthcare provision under extreme duress in the Gaza Strip. Building on recent scholarship on wounding and woundedness (Joronen, 2020, 2021), it proposes the concept of ‘counter wounding’ and draws attention to the improvisational strategies employed by Palestinians to provide (health)care to the wounded and sick. Against a backdrop of occupation and siege (Smith, 2018), attacks on healthcare infrastructures, and the weaponization of healthcare (Fouad, 2017), Palestinian healthcare providers continue to provide life- and limb-saving care to wounded populations, transforming spaces of killing and wounding into often highly creative and effective spaces of care. Drawing on interviews with healthcare workers in Gaza, the paper attends to therapeutic geographies (Dewachi et al, 2014) as something more than the provision of life support to the ‘bare life’ of Palestinians. Rather, care is conceived of as a transformational act that aspires to create new individual and collective political futures and which supports heterogenous Palestinian lives with and beyond injury.
Creating spaces for caring together in food governance led by experiential knowledge

Barbora Adlerova
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Abstract

For some time now, we have been hearing calls demanding direct participation of food insecure people in decision making that impacts them, ‘to recover’ from ‘democratic deficit’ and address long-standing participatory injustices. Some of this work has been happening through food poverty alliances, a diverse place-based configurations of businesses, charities and local government that come together to tackle food poverty locally. In my doctoral research so far I have been thinking about how the four original pillars of ethics of care (Tronto, 1993) could be used as analytical lens, together with participatory justice (Fraser, 2009) emphasising political, economic and sociocultural dimensions of justice and their intersection, to shed light on the ambivalences, tensions and care involved in mobilising this democratic aspect in food partnerships that have been involving ‘experts by experience’. Among others, this can help to illuminate the unjust racialised, classed and gendered caring labour necessary for the social reproduction of food governance.

However, in this paper I’d like to build on the extensive food scholarship (Dowler et al., 2009; Herman, 2021; Parsons, Harman and Cappellini, 2021) that uses ethics of care as an “an oppositional register of meaning and value” (Haylett, 2003, p. 811) and – together with participatory justice - explore how ethics of care emphasising relationality, responsiveness, responsibility and reciprocity could help build ‘spaces of caring together’ across difference that would address some of the caring injustices revealed through the analytical lens of 4 pillars. How can we assemble spaces of caring together where people’s caring and action is interdependent, where different needs and ways of caring are recognised and negotiated and the benefits and burdens are properly attended to? What conditions make just care possible and to what extent can current caring ‘ruins’ enable future care?
Growing Indoors: Care, Complexity and Control in English Vertical Farming

Rob Booth
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Abstract

Controlled Environment Agriculture, or ‘vertical farming’, is a novel way of growing food which is increasingly framed as a technological solution that will transform the future of agriculture. As Wang (2017) displays in the Singaporean context, such emergent agricultural methods produce contesting modalities and understandings of care for and control of both plants and people. This paper presentation takes Wang’s reflections, and a shared interest in futurity, as a starting point upon which to build in two directions. Firstly, based on my ongoing ethnographic work interviewing, visiting, and working with practitioners of controlled environment agriculture I explore some of the lived experiences of both care and control which manifest in vertical farming systems. In this regard I unpack embodied and intertwined temporalities of care and control, highlighting the extent to which agriculture is an inherently future-oriented multi-species process. The presentation links these ethnographic observations with theoretical reflection on the broader political economic factors which mediate the extent to which care and control overlap in varying agri-food contexts. Inspired by work in political ecology, I look to understand the social and material circumstances which create the potential for alternative relations of multi-species care and flourishing. I conclude by arguing that the compromised possibility for multi-species care within the current capitalist agri-food system is demonstrative of the need for social as well as ideational transformation within food systems.

Bibliography

What’s war got to do with public realm? Everyday life in Sarajevo siege

Miza Moreau
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Abstract

A general belief holds that the public realm is the bedrock of democratic civic societies. This paper examines what happens when both a society and the space it inhabits are viciously attacked through nationalistic military aggression. Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, endured a 47-month long siege that targeted the city’s multicultural character, and its civic and domestic spaces. The public realm became an arena of cognitive dissonance and personal resilience. With the typical signifiers of cultural and civic identities destroyed, everyday rituals and micro-scalar interventions of survival created shared cultural experiences and meanings. Ruins became sites of cultural resistance through the staging of events. Streets and open spaces, under ongoing sniper fire and shelling, were either appropriated or avoided depending on their morphologies. Parks and playgrounds were converted to allotment gardens to mitigate food shortages. The paper also explores how the legacy of wartime violence is interwoven into Sarajevo’s public realm today, and the multi-scalar implications of the siege for the broader geopolitical public sphere.
Hymn to the chicken: The ordinary lives of five red hens

Tatiana Zakharova-Goodman
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Abstract

With the pandemic-induced fever for pet companionship, backyard chickens, too, became a hot commodity. The plight of five such birds is followed (alongside, in the Derridean sense) through a narrative that combines an illustrated children’s book and an ethnographic essay. Building from the methods of ‘lively biogeographies’ (Lorimer, 2010) and ‘demetaphorisation’ of animals (Lippit, 2000; Löngren, 2018), I experiment with three parallel narratives. Through illustrations, storytelling for young children, and feminist ethnography of the ordinary (Stewart, 2007; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015), I trace the stories of five chickens who were purchased from a Mennonite family-run hatchery; raised in a home office amidst virtual conference calls; roamed a land delineated by property lines stretching across a settler-colonial state; received affection and gave sustenance; endured weather made more volatile by climate change; consumed feed purchased from a corporation known for suppressing employee rights; drank water that, not 10km away, is pumped round-the-clock from underground reservoirs to be bottled, shipped and sold.

From their origin story buried in hybridization protocols to create prolific egg layers, to their deaths at the claws of wildlife caught-up amidst urban sprawl, the everyday lives of five red hens demand of us to consider matters of ethics, responsibility and entanglement. Working in the ‘contact zone’ (Haraway, 2008) of chicken-human-discourses-places-affects relationships, I wonder what questions may arise when a web of uneven relations thudding against the perceived simplicity of pet ownership is revealed through multiple narrative mediums.
Integrating care into food systems

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Abstract

Producing, transforming, distributing, and consuming food requires a multitude of actors, from the microbes in the soil to the truck drivers, from the salesperson to the bacterial life that supports digestion. Yet, the global food system – far from being neutral – unequally provides and extracts resources around the globe to serve and protect the needs of some, while excluding and/or oppressing others and producing trauma in the process. Drawing on feminist scholarship and permaculture research – two fields that discuss the importance of care but rarely work together – and using social science methods, I ask how to integrate care into food systems, and what are the outcomes of such an integration. I bring together the voices of 35 everyday experts from Cuba, France, and the United States (Arizona) and perspectives from ethics of care, creation care, indigenous scholars, and permaculture specialists, and use grounded theory to develop a definition of care in food system context, and a conceptual map of care that identifies motives for caring, caring practices and their results. I also discuss how caring practices enhance food system’s adaptive capacity and resilience, how a subset of the identified caring practices – “earth care” – contribute to enhancing well-being in general, and Food Well-Being more specifically, using three Arizona case studies: (1) interviews of school teachers, (2) interviews of sustainable farmers, (3) a survey with 96 gardeners. I conclude with recommendations to strengthen a culture of care in food systems, as well as limitations to my research, and future research directions.
Organisational resilience and COVID lockdown: a multi-case study from restaurants in Wuhan, China

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Abstract

At the beginning of 2020, Wuhan was attacked by the outbreak of Covid-19 and experienced severe lockdowns lasting for 76 days. Many businesses in the food system were significantly impacted, and the restaurant industry was among the most impacted ones, with a 65.8% annual revenue reduction. This study looks into organisational resilience by observing nine SMEs of different types and scales in the restaurant sector via semi-structured interviews. By examining the experiences of restaurants with the theoretical lens of dynamic capabilities, we focus on whether and how they sensed the threats and opportunities around the outbreak, seized opportunities by absorbing threats and adapting during and managed threats and transformed after the lockdown.

The analysis highlights that reconfiguring resources and utilising social supports to react rapidly has compensated for the organisations’ unpreparedness. The cumulative effects of dynamic capabilities on organisational resilience at the sensing, seizing and transforming phase further underline the significance of prompt response to developments. However, the nature and capabilities of these organisations have limited their possibilities to obtain equitable results from collective care in policies and society. These findings reflect several worrying aspects of China’s urban restaurant sector in the post-Covid age. From an ethical view, the environment for independent restaurants has generally deteriorated, with prominent competitors gaining overwhelming advantages over small players.

By looking at the struggling actors in the recovering urban food system via an interdisciplinary lens, this study enriches the actor’s perspective of resilience theory and explores the necessity of redistributing care.
‘Do you plan to leave?’ The politics of ‘staying put’ within academia.

Rachael Squire
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Abstract

‘The greatest trick that #academia ever pulled is convincing young impressionable grad students that living close to family is irrelevant or unnecessary….that the desire to do so is a sign of weakness or lack of commitment’ (Sonia Kang, Twitter, March 2022)

This paper explores the politics of ‘staying put’ within academia. It does so within a complex and fraught landscape where the choice of ‘staying put’ and not leaving an institution is a choice denied to many. The early career researcher is asked to be rootless, hypermobile, and always willing to leave. Yet at the same time, ‘staying’ somewhere too long can be frowned upon. The emplaced subject deemed to lack the imagination, creativity, and exposure to the ideas and experience that moving between different institutions might bring. Staying put as an early career researcher is at once a privilege in a precarious system whilst simultaneously a counter-cultural act in a workplace that links mobility to the ability to produce knowledge. The paper draws on my own experience of ‘staying put’ at one institution from undergraduate to lecturer. It grapples and contends with the neoliberal logics of the question I am often asked, ‘do you plan to leave?’ and asks how those of us who have the privilege and luxury of choosing to ‘stay put’ can challenge a system that forecloses such decisions to other colleagues.
Dear Seller: Real Estate ‘Love Letters’ and the Accumulation and Transfer of Wealth via Housing

Jessa Loomis
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Abstract

As an asset, the family home is one way that generational wealth is retained and transferred through the lineage of property. While asset ownership is widely seen as a key to social and economic mobility, property ownership in the United States has long been a right of the few.

This presentation will examine the ‘Dear Seller’ letter, an informal and often out-of-sight practice that is an increasingly common part of the homebuying process, especially in hyper-competitive housing markets in the US. Sometimes known as real estate ‘love letters’, prospective buyers use these letters in an effort to increase the value of a bid without increasing the monetary offer. While these creative strategies may enable prospective homeowners to make a competitive offer without being the highest bidder, this practice raises questions about who is able to succeed in contemporary housing markets.

This presentation will examine how Dear Seller letters connect the prospective buyer, seller, and home and will theorize the role of these letters in contemporary regimes of property acquisition and ownership.
Expansive care as the work of repair, and its problems

Helen Traill, Stephanie Anderson, Deirdre Shaw, Robert McMaster, Andrew Cumbers
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

If care is taken as an activity to make the world liveable (Tronto and Fisher 1990), then repair and recovery are themselves acts of care. This is most evident in areas where attending to the effects of austerity and regeneration through acts of care is, in essence, acting to repair the social fabric. Through exploring an empirical case study of a care space in an area of high deprivation, this article develops a critical understanding of the possibilities and pitfalls of this care-as-repair. Drawing on a conceptual idea of ‘expansive care’, we argue that the current conjuncture, replete as it is with calls to repair, recover and thus to care more, requires a more thoroughgoing understanding of the social impact of existing labours of care. We examine how expansive care unfolds in practice through a case study of a care-full space: a junkyard playground in an area of deprivation. Through highlighting the work that goes into creating common terrain and emphasizing similarity as a means of facilitating caring relations, it argues that attention must be paid to the distribution of what the literature has often highlighted as the burden of care. It thus argues that while advocating for an extension of care, and its revaluing, attention must paid to the risks of uncritically celebrating expansive models of care without due attention to its distribution.
Another Provision: food justice and communal infrastructures of care in East London

Hanna Baumann
UCL, UK

Abstract

In East London, one in four adults and one in three children lives in food poverty. Those in temporary accommodation or without recourse to public funds are especially affected. The compounded effects of austerity, Covid-19 and lockdown, as well as the currently looming cost of living crisis mean that the numbers of those facing difficulty in obtaining sufficient and nutritious food have steadily risen often the past decade and will most likely only increase.

This presentation of co-produced creative and artistic projects as well as findings from ongoing fieldwork will examine the case of the London branch of the National Food Service, a UK-wide network imagining and trialling alternative models for more just food futures. Based on 18 months of collaboration with the National Food Service - London (NFSL) and the visual artist Johann Arens, I will suggest that urban food metabolisms can form part of an infrastructure of care.

The focus will be on NFSL’s careful work and engagement to build communal structures based on a ‘solidarity not charity’ model of mutual care. Through learning together and creating opportunities for patrons to transition from being subjects of care to caring for others, conventional, often patronising food aid relationships are broken down and inverted. Furthermore, those interpellated as passive ‘beneficiaries’ by conventional food banks are asked to articulate their visions for more just food futures and encouraged to join in efforts toward them, including permanently establishing food networks as a infrastructures of care at the neighbourhood level.

I will illustrate these points through quotations from discussions held in a series of workshops with community food volunteers and patrons; co-produced visuals; excerpts from texts written by people with personal experience of food injustice as part of a collaborative publication; and through what we call ‘poetic packing lists’ – anonymised versions of the instructions for food parcels delivered across North-East London during lockdown.
The Platformization of Real Estate in Memphis TN: Roofstock and the Rise of Fractional Ownership

Kaela Sanborn-Hum
University of Toronto, Canada

Abstract

For the past decade, digital real estate platforms have fueled speculative activity in the US housing market. Property trading platforms, such as the Oakland-based firm Roofstock, have aggressively pursued the liquification of real estate assets with the goal to trade housing equity like corporate stocks. This research focuses on Memphis, TN – a region heavily promoted for investment by Roofstock – to assess the platform’s integration of local single family rental (SFR) housing into the company’s fractional ownership schemes. By examining the contractual agreements governing the exchange of investor-owned housing, this research will discuss the new arrangements of home ownership and social relations in Memphis as produced by Roofstock, and broadly digital real estate. Moreover, I will discuss the implications of the platformization of SFR housing as possibilities for the ease of speculative activity and investor strategy to reinforce housing as a primary mechanism of capital circulation.
Centring ethics of care in understanding mutual assistance in semi-arid Kenya

June Po\textsuperscript{1}, Prof Gordon M. Hickey\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}University of Greenwich, UK. \textsuperscript{2}McGill University, Canada

Abstract

Mutual assistance has contributed to livelihood recovery and resilience against famine in smallholder communities of semi-arid Kenya. It is closely integrated with farm labour sharing and food provisioning. In this paper, we explore informal mutual assistance between neighbours and their motivation for participation in fundraisers. We conducted twelve focused group discussions, 77 semi-structured interviews, and 250 household surveys in Machakos and Makueni counties. Drawing on social claims, sustainable livelihoods, and social reproduction literature, analysis shows that care labour, such as childcare, visiting individuals with illness, cooking, lending food, and fetching water and firewood, is valued as mutual assistance by women. Individuals who lend essential agricultural tools to neighbours are motivated by an ethics of care, supporting neighbours’ capacity to subsist from their land in the context of chronic food insecurity. Analysis shows pragmatic and intangible motivations for participation in fundraisers. Beyond being effective in pooling financial resources, respondents reported promoting cooperation and unity, fulfilling social obligations, and upholding traditions, among others, as intangible motivations for participation. Fundraisers pose opportunities for emotional support and reconciliation. Eating communal food was reported as an incentive to attend fundraisers, which underscores the integral value of food and its associated traditions in community mutual assistance. Beyond facilitating reciprocal care and building relationships, we found fundraisers also serve an unexpected purpose for marginalised groups. A social reproduction approach allows us to critically examine how fundraisers may reproduce overlapping social and gender hierarchies through those who organise, participate, contribute, and those who benefit.
Governing through Cash: Trust, Transfers and the Politics of Accountability in Refugee Humanitarianism

Lauren Martin, Hanna Ruszczyk
Durham University, UK

Abstract

This paper examines the recent explosion of cash transfers in humanitarian responses to refugee crises and locates these changes in the context of humanitarian sector transformations more broadly. Cash transfers contributed $5.6billion in humanitarian aid spending, doubling between 2016 and 2019 (CaLP 2020). This expansion followed years of evidence-building and advocacy between humanitarian organisations, consultants and donors, culminating in a global consensus on the benefits of cash transfers at the World Humanitarian Summit of 2016. Shifting modalities of aid delivery, from in-kind food and goods towards cash has required massive reconfigurations, including new logistical infrastructure, new agreements with financial service providers, new back office record-keeping processes, new data and information management protocols, and new accountability mechanisms. Based on interviews with international non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, and consultants, our research analyses how broader humanitarian sector transformations around accountability shaped—and were shaped by—cash transfers delivery. Through our analysis of these interviews, reports and documentation, and online ethnography, we analyse three key tensions in humanitarian assistance to refugees: (1) trust; (2) inter-organisation coordination; and (3) crisis temporalities. We argue that while the technical project of cash transfers has received the lion's share of attention, these three problematics reveal the enduring power asymmetries. As cash transfers dramatically reconfigure relationships between local humanitarian aid organisations, people receiving aid, international organisations and donors, the politics of aid delivery—deciding who does and does not receive it, in what form and for how long—is obscured by technical discussions of interoperable data, coordination, and monitoring.
Exporting Surveillance-as-a-Service: “Hello, how can I Spy for you Today?”

Yung Au
University of Oxford, UK

Abstract

This paper examines the artificial intelligence-assisted surveillance marketplace that caters to governments in Asia and beyond. Through case studies and the mapping of exports routes and entanglements of surveillance technologies of the past and present, it explores some of the more obscured power relations that are embedded in technology firms that regularly fly under the radar of public scrutiny. This work builds on the de/post-colonial and feminist literature that excavates how outsourcing becomes yet another way of how colonial relations are reproduced – in these cases, through the reliance of digital infrastructures, algorithms, and data pipelines that originate and are owned by the west and other centers of power. It is important to excavate the supply chain of today’s surveillance industry as there is immense agenda-setting powers in corporations that shape both the supply and the demand for authorities around the world. Likewise, interventions are urgently needed as various dependencies and inequities are becoming even more deeply entrenched through what is essentially the “lending” of crucial governance infrastructures, opaque proprietary systems, and caches of data that are designed, calibrated and controlled by a small group of elites. What decisions are forfeit in an off-the-shelf model of policing? What sprawling and cascading consequences are prompted when a government signs up to a life-time subscription services of facial recognition software? Who are treated as training data and what places are seen as testing grounds of violent technologies?
Housing, Inheritance, and Family Abolition

William McKeithen
University of Washington, USA

Abstract

In their 1848 Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels called for the abolition of the bourgeois family as a unit for reproducing capitalist property relations, through, for example, the convention of family inheritance. Since then, “this infamous proposal” of family abolition has perennially animated struggles for gender freedom and a post-capitalist future—from the Bolshevik Revolution to 1970s women’s and gay liberation. This work-in-progress presentation seeks to revitalize family abolitionist theory and put it into conversation with contemporary housing debates. First, I turn to the work of feminist geographer Dolores Hayden who both critiqued the Fordist family home and imagined alternative designs for collective housing and social reproduction. Second, I ask how we might update Hayden’s imagination by incorporating more recent theories of racialized property regimes and the financialized housing market. For example, how does the family today serve to organize and (re)distribute housing wealth and property debt along lines of race, class, gender, and geography? I am especially interested in what we might learn from contemporary housing struggles. For example, how are contemporary struggles for housing justice resisting and/or reinforcing the family as our de facto unit for solidarity and getting on together?
Voices in a Pandemic (VIP): using deep mapping to explore children’s changing perceptions and experiences during COVID-19 ‘recovery’

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Abstract

Children are unheard voices within the COVID-19 pandemic. We are unaware how intersections of complex factors in specific social settings have impacted their perceptions and are determining what ‘recovery’ means. ‘Voices in a Pandemic: Children’s Lockdown Experiences Applied to Recovery’ (VIP-CLEAR) has been working with four partner schools in Bristol, UK to explore how risk and mitigation strategies impacted the learning, development, health and wellbeing of children (6-11yrs) in socially disadvantaged areas in multicultural Bristol, UK. Working with a socially-engaged artist, we developed a sequence of creative, child-focused, active methodologies - ‘a creative diary process’ - to encourage children to share their experiences. Our interdisciplinary research aimed to gather and critically evaluate their worldviews, perceptions and experiences so this evidence can support their involvement in ‘recovery’. In our processes, we had concern for the otherness of children. This paper focuses on the first phase - deep mapping of ‘their world’ in the emergence of LOCKDOWN3. This was a two-stage mapping process - phase 1 followed by phase 2 after elapse of 6-98 days. In face-to-face sessions, the children’s dialogue was captured using observational notetaking. This activity initially took place with >700 children between February-June 2021; we then analysed thematically a consented subset of 131 maps. Our analysis revealed large diversity in children’s experiences along varied continua - with implications for an individual child’s health and wellbeing. Strongest themes were:

- (Re)connections-disconnections
- contraction-expansion;
- disempowerment-empowerment;
- presence-absence/loss;
- strong sense of place-lack of sense of place; and
- real worlds-imagined worlds.

Over the mapping timeline, we gained a unique window into changing worlds, and valued places (green; digital) and relationships (human; non-human). This research provides a valuable archive of children’s voices to inform policy/practice around adaptation to future social shocks.
Hacking Housing: technologies and processes of alternative housing models

Sophia Maalsen
University of Sydney, Australia

Abstract

In this short piece I want to think through the speculative nature of the ‘hack’ as useful in understanding the production and consumption of housing in the digital and renting age. The hack can help us think through the growth in alternative housing models as housing providers and consumers are innovating with novel models, tenure, techniques and practices to ‘hack’ housing and drive the diversity of housing systems. These include housing startups and digital platforms that underpin co-living models, household management apps, and, sharing housing among others.

It is easy to critique housing hacks as having limited impact on housing inequality because of their small scale, piecemeal nature, and capacity to being co-opted by and at times be complicit with existing neoliberal housing systems. But to ignore them, the imaginaries, and the opportunities they can create is unhelpful, blinkered and disregards the political potential of hacks. Hacks prefigure alternative housing futures. Recent work has shown the value of prefiguring as a mechanism of change and challenging what is thought possible (Tattersall and Iveson 2021, 6). The speculative nature of hacking is aligned with prefiguring and is one way in which people can make alternative housing possibilities visible. Hacks can help us to think about different housing futures and to think differently about housing futures: they can prompt us to, as Madden and Marcuse advocate, “let a thousand housing alternatives bloom” (2016, 208). Can hacking be a way of activating these alternatives?
Beds-for-rent: co-living and the making of an asset class out of multiple occupancy housing

Tim White
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Abstract

Having historically been a fragmented, peripheral, stigmatised, in places anti-capitalist housing form, multiple occupancy housing - shared rental accommodation - has attracted considerable global investment inflows over the last five years. Rebranded 'co-living', it has been reinvented as a real estate asset class, with large-scale developments emerging across European and North American cities. How and why has this happened? Building upon interviews with co-living agents (companies, developers, investors), attendance of co-living events and critical analysis of marketing material and media – and drawing on scholarship on assets and assetisation - this paper seeks to answer this question. It documents how, in the context of a severe affordability crisis pushing many more into renting and sharing housing, a multitude of agents - including city governments, global investors and real estate services companies - have come together to make this new market, ultimately turning it into an institutional asset class within the space of five years. I identify a new medium, or unit, of value extraction among investors in this sector and others: the bed. I argue that understanding this new way of understanding and producing housing - which exploits existing inequalities, and beckons towards housing futures characterised by dispossession and precarity - is critical for scholars studying the assetisation of housing moving forward.
Barrier removal as reparative urbanism: The case of inclusive active travel in Greater Manchester

Harriet Larrington-Spencer
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Abstract

Increasing active travel (walking inclusively defined, as well as cycling) is central to reducing carbon emissions. Car-free routes are an important component of urban active travel networks, connecting spaces that are often difficult to walk and cycle between using the existing road network. Such routes, however, commonly have physical barriers which allow people walking or cycling on two-wheel bikes to move through but prevent access of disabled people using mobility aids. Inequalities in accessing these routes was particularly pronounced during sequential Covid-19 lockdowns in the UK, when people were spending more time in their local areas. In this paper, removal of barriers on car-free paths is understood as reparative urbanism that, through enabling inclusive access, contributes to socially-just urban futures. Using Greater Manchester as case study, this paper tracks different methods of barrier removal (institutional, legal, informal) and considers implications in terms of enabling disabled people’s active travel.
Strangers at Home?

Rivka Saltiel
University of Graz, Austria

Abstract

On the Ambivalences of Encounter, Compassion and Care Through a feminist care ethics lens, the paper explores the particular host-guest relations of Hébergement, an informal hosting initiative for undocumented migrants in Brussels. It elaborates on how the intimate, private setting of hosting at home affects a caring-with relationship. Hosting and being hosted significantly alters from other forms of shelter and migrant (or homeless) support. There is no script for this particular social constellation. Hosting requires trust and a great deal of physical and emotional labor – for all involved and often leads to exhaustion. Being together in and sharing the intimate space of the home, involves a continuous negotiation of – sometimes conflicting – needs (for space, intimacy, distance, self-care, ...) of all at home. The informal caring arrangements and the resultant relations of Hébergement are ambivalent and are understood as yet another expression of the lack of sufficient and adequate caring resources on a societal level (‘care crisis’). With its fundamentally relational approach, feminist care ethics unravels the uneven structures that permeate and define both the practice of care and caring relations. Thereby, it challenges the structural organization of care in capitalism that is exclusive, inherently feminized, domesticized, privatized and individualized and envisions an alternative more just social organization of care – in a caring-with society. Drawing on narrative interviews, the paper explores how strangers encounter each other, how they care-with each other, and how they address the potentials, ambivalences and limits of hosting and caring-with strangers at home.
Fuzzy boundaries and belonging in a Japanese inn

Chris McMorran
National University of Singapore, Singapore

Abstract

Much like a homestay or a traditional B&B, a small Japanese inn (ryokan) features a fuzzy boundary between family and business in the intimate space of the home. Given Japan's strong cultural expectations surrounding gender, hospitality, and the home, women are typically at the center of both the family and the business, responsible for both daily and generational social reproduction, while also serving as the face and body of ryokan hospitality to guests. In this presentation I explore the embodied geographies of hosting in a Japanese inn. I describe the fuzziness of the family/business, from the ways domestic space and family timetables are rearranged around check-in and check-out times, to the ways female inn owners feel trapped at home waiting for guests to arrive. Theirs is a 24-hour a day, 365-day a year responsibility to guests, the family, and the community. Despite these pressures, I point out that mobilizing hospitality in rural Japan can be an intensely satisfying experience that brings personal satisfaction. Moreover, I demonstrate a wider politics of belonging that can accompany hospitality, as ryokan owners achieve can both short-term economic gain and long-term status as “locals.” This work is based on a year of participant observation as a ryokan employee and two decades of engagement with a hot springs resort in southern Japan.
Love in the Time of Climate Crisis

Ankit Kumar
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

The Anthropocene demands thinking of humans simultaneously as a geological and a political force. The geological avatar demands a global ‘community’, a collective. The political avatar seeks justice for particular communities. How do we reconcile these two scales and find a unifying humanism that keeps spaces of intrahuman justice open? The legacy of Anthropocene is deeply infused with the legacy of colonisation. To build a genuine solidarity centred on, the Anthropocene human needs to be thought from the vantage of the colonised human.

Drawing on postcolonial and anticolonial theories and working with the instances of hospitality a European man received in India in 2019, this paper makes a case for thinking through friendship, hospitality, and love. It argues for an ethical commitment towards love for strange guest and friends. His journey, although centred on driving an electric car around the world to demonstrate the possibility of a low carbon world, would have failed if not for the space, food and electricity offered by people on the way, many who would be excluded if they made a journey to Europe. This opens us to new ways of thinking about coping with, adapting to, and mitigation of climate change. The paper asks if it is possible to create an ethical community that operates within but without states, one that is open to guests, friendship and hospitality, to cope and adapt in a climate changed world.
Abstract

If neoliberalism is “dead but dominant” (Smith, 2008), then the illiberal city is alive and dominant. This paper troubles the notion of ‘the liberal city’, and the fallacy of ascribing ‘illiberalism’ to world-regions or nation-states - a residual of colonialist ‘territorial traps’ and ‘moral geographies’ (Koch, 2019) - by suggesting that illiberalism is now a dominant urban paradigm, albeit taking contextually-specific forms. Furthermore, neoliberalism alone is no longer a sufficient critical frame to conceptualize the hybridized and networked webs of authoritarian and fascistic urban ideologies and spatial formations across East and West, South and North. Finally, this paper addresses the need to spatialize and make geographical the new authoritarianism/authoritarian populism, which are producing urban space and territory in profound and paradigm-altering ways, via complicated webs of ideology, infrastructures, and agents.

Drawing upon ethnographic observations, embedded research, interviews and virtual ethnography conducted over a decade, from Singapore’s heartland to the U.S. and Britain (and elsewhere), the paper is organized around three spatial vectors through which to interrogate the illiberal city. The first is the space of ideology from charismatic mega-churches in Singapore to the urban geographies of conspiracism and post-truth in the West. The second vector is that of infrastructure, specifically those which are perpetuating, and perpetuated by, illiberal belief systems, networks and finance: private compounds; crypto-currencies; logistical chains. The third vector is that of community, a comparative perspective on the regressive and reactionary grassroots in so-called progressive settings, from San Francisco’s LGBTQ Castro district to Singapore’s art-activist networks.
Convivial encounters in the city: On welcoming the other

Edward H. Huijbens
Wageningen University, Netherlands

Abstract

The urban is a site of diversity, multiplicity and conviviality under threat from commercialisation, not least through tourism. The dominant socio-spatial logic of capitalism has urbanized its extractive practices capturing value from the urban and social fabric and its affective and communicative values. This monetizing of everyday life through all manners of platform capitalism embedded in ubiquitous connectivity will erode urban cultural diversity. As a counter measure the paper discusses the theoretical contours of urban conviviality. The paper will conceptually explore how to re-story the urban fostering such conviviality, engage with the most recent tourism policy of the city of Amsterdam and recount engagements with tourism stakeholders and municipal planners under the banner of ‘reinventing the city’ beyond interlaced crisis of housing, overtourism and climate change. The paper argues that conviviality mediated through a vibrant urban fabric can make for spaces of alterity and reinstate use-value as central to our economic systems. Countering thereby capitalist monoculture of urbanity, urban design animated by care and responsiveness can foster multiplicity and conviviality which can progressively reinvent the city. Applied to the tourism encounter and a reoriented understanding of hospitality allows for tourism animated by autonomy and creativity, personal interdependence and redistributive justice, contributing to the momentum needed to overturn the deadening urban frontier of capital accumulation.
Bad Guests: The US Military Abroad

Jesse Connuck
Queen Mary University of London, UK

Abstract

There are approximately 220,000 United States military and civilian personnel currently stationed on over 800 overseas military bases in 150—mostly allied—countries (Hjelmgaard 2021). While many migrants travel with limited resources, US military personnel move abroad with the full support of the United States military, who works hard to help them feel at home, no matter how far away from home they may be. That support comes in the form of American-style suburbs and shopping malls, golf courses, parking lots, and bowling alleys, regardless of local conditions. In this process of helping American military personnel feel more at home, the US military not only occupies land in dense areas and displaces residents, but also is implicated in a long history of contaminating local environments and increasing rates of both violent and non-violent crime (Lutz 2009). While the welcome military personnel receive varies considerably between countries and communities, in this paper I would like to explore what happens when a guest tries to make themselves at home in your home. What does it mean to be hospitable to a guest who knows no etiquette? The pressure on most migrants to assimilate is strong (Ahmed 2010), but for military personnel, the idea of America as home not only travels with them, but trickles outward into their surrounding communities (Gillem 2007). Whether literally or “merely” culturally, this paper asks, what happens when the guest invades?
Police Power in Green: Furthering Political Ecologies of the State

Francis Masse
Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

The growth of wildlife and environmental crime has catalysed efforts to strengthen state policing to better exert control over activities, flows, and people that threaten states’ desired socio-ecological orders. The expanded role of policing in and over human-environment relations provokes conceptual and empirical imperatives to better centre policing in political ecology and political geography scholarship on state-environment relations. This paper begins with the question of how political ecology might better account for and conceptualise policing power, and how doing so can help understand how, where, and through what practices and institutions states exercise power over socio-ecological relations. To capture the role of policing in exerting power and control over socio-ecological orders, this article brings together insights on critical theories of police power, conservation power and state power to develop the concept of police power in green. I argue that police power in green grounds the mechanisms through which state power is exerted over socio-ecological relations in ways that reflect a broader strengthening of state power. I use multi-scalar and ethnographic research to examine three processes that extend and expand police power in green, and related state power. These are: 1) expanding conservation law and criminality beyond conservation spaces to national territory; 2) creating new environmental police bodies; 3) strengthening and expanding traditional policing, enforcement and criminal justice institutions. I end by outlining how police power in green can connect and further critical scholarship on political ecologies of the state and broader debates on policing, the green state and state power.
Aligning climate policies and ecosystem-based adaptation in the Baixada Santista coastal metropolitan region

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Abstract

Although coastlines worldwide are at risk of climate change impacts (e.g. sea leve rise, coastal erosion, floodings), scientific projections suggest that the Southern hemisphere is experiencing the most severe and immediate impacts. Coastal municipalities have a range of land use conflicts, and the presence of a harbor significantly increases their complexity. Baixada Santista metropolitan region is among the most populated and important economic hub in São Paulo state hosting the largest port of South America, the port of Santos. It is also a region subjected to intensive urban occupation pressure over mangrove systems. With most of critical infrastructure highly vulnerable to extreme rainfall events, climate adaptation is a paramount. In this talk we will discuss the major results of a systematic analysis aimed to review the best ecosystem-based adaptation practices in the global south characterizing key pathways and reliable indicators for evaluating and monitoring ecosystem-based initiatives. Our findings are also helpful in other coastal urban contexts advancing coastal adaptation within a metropolitan governance level.
Municipal reparations as housing justice

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Abstract

In the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Brionna Taylor, and under pressure from subsequent community organizing, an increasingly number of U.S. municipalities have been considering what reparations might look like in their communities. In 2021, thirteen mayors came together to form ‘Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity,’ or MORE, pledging to support federal reparations legislation (specifically HR 40) and investigate possibilities for local reparation programs that would account not only for enslavement and its afterlives but also racialized inequities resulting from specific city policies and practices. Many of these proposed programs--and the few actualized initiatives, such as the program in Evanston, Illinois--center on housing in recognition of how racial discriminatory policies and practices have contributed to displacement, dispossession, and a significant wealth gap. As part of a broader project on reparative municipal geographies, in this presentation we discuss how these city-level reparative initiatives relate to ongoing housing justice organizing and objectives, and how they may reframe municipal housing policies going forward.
"I wouldn’t really have anything to blame, other than myself": Class-differentiated engagement with private tuition in England

Helena Pimlott-Wilson, Sarah Holloway, Sam Whewall
Loughborough University, UK

Abstract

Emphasis on educational outcomes for both individual and national success has suffused the education system with market values. This marketized model positions families as active consumers of education, encouraging schools (and young people) to compete with one another. For those young people at the epicentre of the neoliberal social imaginary, the accrual of educational credentials in an effort to secure dominant positions in education and labour markets has fuelled the growth in private tuition. This ‘shadow education’ – which operates outside state education with the intention to increase performance within it – represents an opportunity for young people to catch up, keep up or get ahead in high stake exams. For parents, procuring tuition can signify their performance as responsibilised, active consumers of educational services (Doherty & Dooley, 2018). However, statistics demonstrate stark variations in usage by class, ethnicity and region (Holloway & Kirby, 2020), whereby some families seek to maintain their privileged position as others aim to mitigate inequity and secure future social mobility.

This paper presents a three-fold analysis of the class-differentiated use of private tuition by families in England. Firstly, it explores the experiences of working-class families who are unable to access private tuition, examining their barriers to and perceptions of the industry. Secondly, it examines the working-class families who, through financial sacrifice, aim to bolster their child’s success through tuition. Finally, the paper turns to middle-class families who understand their privilege in accessing tuition yet who inculcate individualised narratives of effort and hard work. This results in a moral narrative whereby rewards are conferred on them while others do not ‘try’ hard enough. The paper demonstrates that critiques of tuition as a divisive, neoliberal practice bear weight, but the same neoliberal social imaginary also underpins families’ individualised efforts to overcome classed inequalities through social mobility.
‘Actually existing’ racial capitalisms: austerity, governmentality, and bordering in the UK’s financialised housing associations

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Abstract

This paper provides a critical intervention into recent geographical debates on racial capitalism, interrogating the role that housing associations play in its (re)production in the UK. Housing associations are institutional spaces within which novel forms of third-sector financialisation take place, as well as increasingly operating as sites of austerity, governmentality, and bordering. Race is central to all of these processes, but insufficient critical attention has been afforded to the intersections of class, race, and migratory status in extant research on housing associations. Moreover, existing research has been limited by the tendency to mobilise the homogenising ‘BAME’ category that can obscure as much as it reveals. We argue this is a significant lacuna given that new and multiple forms of racialised exclusion and inequality cohere and manifest in housing associations. There is accordingly a pressing need for a robust interrogation of racial capitalisms through housing associations, and of the role of housing associations via the conceptual lens of racial capitalism. In concluding, the paper argues for a new focus on ‘actually existing’ racial capitalisms, and the need for detailed analyses of the logics and practices of racial capitalisms across a variety of sites and scales.
Development and contribution of translocal networks to new housing commons in Europe

Corinna Hölz
Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany

Abstract

We are currently observing a trend toward the establishment of different models of housing commons in many European countries such as the formation of new housing cooperatives in Catalonia, the adoption of the CLT-model in the UK and further European countries or the translocal mobilization of the Mietshäuser Syndikat in Germany. In my research I am interested in the learning processes and the contribution of translocal networks to this trend. With respect to the Syndikat model (first field study), my findings illustrate that new housing projects make explicit use of such networks in order to collectivize housing successfully, whereas in the longer run crucial resources are mobilized on the basis of local relations, and it is difficult to maintain international exchange and support. In my second field study I put the focus on the CLT-model in order to find out how translocal networks have developed regarding other housing models and how they contribute to the mobilization of housing commons. Furthermore, I am interested how the potential of multiscalar horizontal and vertical networks of housing commons can be used and unequal framework conditions bridged without limiting underlying principles such as horizontal decision-making structures.
Geography projects and the search for shared grammars of just research

Shawn Bodden
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

In this presentation, I aim to open up a series of questions about the ways geographers formulate their roles in struggles for social justice as well as the meaning and social impact of their research through the ubiquitous yet chronically unexamined grammar of ‘projects’. Projects are routinely used to conceptualise, organise, fund (with luck!), communicate and do geographic research, yet they have been overshadowed by reflection on more familiar topics such as methods and theoretical frameworks. Querying ‘geography’s project’ has been an important mode of reflexive critique put to work by feminist and critical geographers to interrogate the discipline’s contributions—and shortcomings—in the struggle for social justice (Christopherson 1989; Katz 2006), but these political questions about who defines geography’s project as a discipline have not extended to the concrete geography projects we work on day to day. Critical scholars in sociology and philosophy have, however, observed how projects as a prevailing ‘mode of production’ can subject the meaning and value of work to external evaluations, norms and systems of power (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Kunst 2016). By putting earlier interrogations of ‘geography’s project’ in communication with Clive Barnett’s (2017) recent call to understand justice not as an ‘ideal’, but as a condition approached through situated responses to injustice ‘through intersubjectively mediated, shared inquiry’, I ask how the ‘projectness’ of geographic research mediates, attenuates or enables geographers to take part in processes of public redress—and to what extent we might use projects as tools for sharing in the work of social justice.
Accommodating Affordability: Contextual perspectives on delineating one’s Right to Adequate Housing

Kriti Veerappan
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Abstract

The study comparatively explores the politics of housing exclusion in the ongoing dismantling of affordable housing systems across diverse contexts of the Global North and the Global South where nation states have played a central role in commodifying the housing sector. Numerous socio-political factors, both global and context-specific, contribute to exclusionary housing policies, which in turn, elicit distinct collective responses and claims to housing rights by those who face forced evictions. The focus of the study lies in examining the interaction of international housing right ideals with specific cases of housing insecurity in the Danish case of Mjølnerparken, in Copenhagen, where residents face eviction due to the ‘ghetto’ label and the Indian case of Dharavi, in Mumbai, where slum dwellers face eviction due to a government redevelopment proposal. The cases are compared to evaluate the role of the international human rights system in the detection of eviction-inducing policies, in effecting redressive measures for such policies and in the system’s influence on local acts of collective resistance. The study relies on a qualitative analysis of state policy documents, international human rights monitoring body reports and interviews. Results indicate that the interaction of the international human rights system has been notably greater with the Danish case than with the Indian case. Both struggles for citizenship claim for a right to stay, however, while the Danish residents’ claim seeks inclusivity, the Indian slum dwellers’ radical claim through illegal land occupation, calls for greater transformative change.
Radical openness and the activist academic

Eveleigh Buck-Matthews
Birmingham City University, UK

Abstract

A quick search of the RGS-IBG Annual Conference 2022 CFP’s will elicit 20 results for activism and another 19 for activist. There is no doubt that activism underlies many motivations and practices in academic geography. That said, this paper critiques the extent to which we can ‘practice what we preach’. Using double reflexivity (Black and Commane 2012), it unpacks the complexity and interconnections between what we do, what we teach and how activist openness is not a given in the neoliberal university. Through reflections on a PAR project; People and Dancefloors, the paper will explore the messy negotiations of activist, scholar, and teacher. The invisible lines we draw, the part we play in presenting but often not empowering action in those we teach. ‘Outputs’ from this project have led to a collection of radically reflexive articles (Zampini et al 2021), podcasts and, most importantly solidarity, amongst activist-scholars seeking to highlight the hidden narratives of recreational drug takers.


Being left behind beyond recovery: ‘crip time’ and chronic illness in neoliberal academia

Bethan Evans
University of Liverpool, UK

Abstract

Recent growth in chronic illness in the form of Long Covid, has drawn attending to the fact that, for some people, recovery does not follow acute illness. Whilst many chronic illnesses remain poorly understood, they can have a profound and long-lasting impact on people’s lives, changing not only the spaces that are accessible and the ways in which people engage with these spaces, but also shifting the ways in which time is experienced. ‘Crip time’ is an approach to understanding this in multiple ways. As Kafer (2013) explains, it allows us to understand that the way we conceptualise disability often involves temporal terms. For example, the very definition of ‘chronic’ illness is itself temporal, as are ideas of recovery, remission, relapse, prognosis and so on. In the absence of treatment, management of chronic illness often involves a reorientation in time through, for example, careful pacing of activity. Navigating spaces and institutional structures designed for ‘normative’ bodyminds also often takes longer for those who don’t fit. And, as Sheppard (2020) explains, ‘Crip time’, borrowing from ‘Queer Time’, also troubles ideas of the future and of productivity. In this paper I use ‘Crip Time’ to reflect on experiences of chronic illness within the neoliberal academy, considering the ways in which the drive to hyperproductivity can leave those who’s bodyminds work differently feeling left behind, and asking what possibilities ‘crip time’ might offer to imagine more inclusive practices.
Captive Consumers: Value, Accumulation and Infrastructure in the UK Home Office’s Privatized Asylum Accommodation

Anna Pearce
University of St Andrews, UK

Abstract

For this presentation, I will be focusing on the value signifier of the ‘Service User’ within the Asylum Accommodation contracts. In examining its construction, I argue that the creation of the ‘Service User’ is an essential mechanism for the differential production of space, value and disciplinary regimes. With its foundation in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the contract thus creates ‘captive consumers’, essential for the success of contracts and their value turnover.
Palestinian Women at the Intersection of Colonial and Patriarchal Violence: Cultural renegotiations of religion and tradition in Gaza

Hala Shoman
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This project examines the challenges of intervening in Violence Against Women (VAW) in Palestine, a patriarchal society, which is also under military-colonial occupation. With a focus on the Gaza Strip, the study examines Palestinian women’s perceptions and experiences of VAW as well as their attitudes toward the interventions on VAW implemented in their communities. It critically examines international secular models of interventions on VAW while, at the same time, exploring the possibility of combatting VAW by reappropriating certain religious and traditional norms, on which Palestinian social cohesion and survival rest in the context of settler-colonial occupation. By doing so, it produces new knowledge on VAW at the intersection of military-colonial violence and patriarchy in Islamic societies. This is an applied research project, which is influenced by participatory action research. It uses qualitative methods to address how Gaza Palestinian women respond to VAW and how they experience the mostly secular models of interventions implemented in Gaza. The project will also involve key professional figures in the field of VAW (NGOs, police, psychologists) and community and religious leaders while foregrounding the voices, concerns of Palestinian women. This is a collaborative project with two Gaza-based Palestinian organisations—The Gaza Mental Health Programme and the Save Youth Future Society—with which the researcher has established working relationships. The researcher has extensive experience in the field of women’s rights, and she is planning to use the findings of the research for implementing new community-based pilot projects on VAW after the completion of the PhD.
Does my future matter? Class, race, schooling, and the 'counter-diasporic' educational strategies of Nigerian diaspora families.

Ruth Cheung Judge
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Abstract

This paper explores young people’s experiences of moving between multiple classed positions as they move across transnational social fields for schooling. Specifically, the paper is based on research into ‘homeland education’ in the Nigerian diaspora – the practice whereby parents send children growing up in Britain to Nigeria, their country of heritage, for several years of schooling at adolescence. These counter-diasporic educational flows underscore the dynamic nature of classed experience for transnational young people and families, and the intersectional influences of class and racism. For instance, decisions to send children for a ‘homeland’ sojourn can be understood as parental attempts to redress the classed ‘status loss’ experienced with migration; in particular, where the experience of being stigmatised in society and school affects young people’s hoped-for educational trajectories. By sending their children to private schools in Nigeria, parents’ hope the social experiences of ‘middling’ or ‘upper-middle class’ educational spaces will ‘re-set’ their children’s aspirational horizons and classed subjectivities. Young people themselves highlight a contrast between their affective experiences of schooling in the diaspora, where classed milieus and racism intersect to lead to a sense that they and their futures ‘don’t matter’; and Nigeria, where they find themselves positioned as privileged diasporans and / or part of a national elite, of whom there are high expectations. By exploring such findings, the paper argues that classed experience should be conceived in relational, dynamic ways, beyond ‘methodologically nationalist’ frameworks; and that there is more scope for children's geographies to consider how class, race and transnationalism intersect in young lives.
Abstract

Informal settlements often are at high risk of disasters such as fire and flooding. There is a paucity of ethnographic research on the lived reality of these disasters, and more particularly the role that they play in shaping the urban transformation in such settlements. In this presentation, I examine the intersection of the disasters and everyday resilience in Karail, the largest informal settlement in Dhaka housing more than 300,000 dwellers. The findings presented here are an outcome of year-long fieldwork in Karail that was conducted in 2019, during which, I conducted around 40 interviews, collecting oral histories of past disaster events and focusing particularly on the major fire that burned down 5000 houses in 2017. The key finding was not that the disasters destroy houses that are rebuilt better or differently, which they do, but rather, the agency of the disaster is often in a ‘narrative’ sense, which Buchanan calls ‘narratological agency’. In other words, the disaster events became part of the local discourse, re-shaped the imaginaries of a house, and eventually, even many of the unaffected dwellers had self-modified the house and altered the urban fabric. The major urban-scale self-upgrading of the settlement thus can be correlated to major disaster events: the flood of 1998 changed the houses from bamboo mats to lintel-post, the fire of 2004 was followed by a change to tin metal sheet houses and the fire of 2016/2017 was followed by a rapid transition to brick-and-mortar structures. These transformations were everyday in nature, the result of a cacophonous synchronisation of the dwellers, often the result of a meso level collectivity, that was not coordinated by a central authority, nor completely individual—these geographies provide us with valuable lessons in resilience and the narrative role of disasters in shaping them.
Vernaculars of the home: gendered relations of everyday space and security

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Abstract

This paper is a critical intervention into vernacular security studies through a focus on the home as the site of particular vernacular communication - stories, movements and activities. Conceptualisations of the home shift through relations, geographies and imaginaries compounding the home as a multifaceted concept and empirical site. I question how (in)securities emerge and are expressed, challenging assumptions about what the vernacular is, how it transpires, and the influencing function of ‘gendered’ spaces. The driving question of this paper is: how is the vernacularity of space effected by three integral elements of the home – the materiality, architecture, and location? Empirically situated within literature on urban refugees and non-camp humanitarianism, I explore work from feminist geography and anthropology. Selecting the home as the space of grounded vernaculars, I draw on ethnography conducted with five women in the host village of Zaatari, Jordan. I interrogate the home as a site imbued with power and politics that invariably becomes entangled with articulations of (in)security. This is particularly pertinent in protracted displacement where ‘ideas of home invoke a sense of place, belonging or alienation’ (Blunt & Varley 2004), where the position of women is ‘highly contingent on their caste, class, education, social and family position and all the ways in which state and society perceive them’ (Sanyal 2022). Consequently, I conclude with an analysis of the influencing power of the home in understanding belonging and refugeeeness, juxtaposing power dynamics of refugee governance. Zaatari’s women did not articulate their lives as being circumscribed by their refugeeeness; as being separate or extraordinary from other residents or refugees. A spatial analysis of the home provides a counternarrative to humanitarian strategies.
Contested Landscapes: ‘Race’ and national parks within the English Countryside

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Abstract

The discourse on how the concept of ‘race’ affects racialised groups accessing national parks within the English Countryside has become increasingly prominent and contested topic in academia and political debates in the UK. This paper addresses the sociological dimensions of ‘race’, racism and whiteness of the English countryside question, as a discourse to understand the impact this has on racialised groups accessing national parks. I argue this in relation to how the English countryside have always been intrinsically associated with English identity, perceived through an ethnocentric lens, merging national identity with white identity reinforcing the concepts of ‘race,’ racism and whiteness. From an ontological and epistemological perspective, I posit as a racialised scholar, there’s need to understand this discourse analysis. I contend this is pivotal, helping to deconstruct, decolonise and dismantle the white racial frame associated with those spaces. I draw on Critical Race Theory as an intellectual framework to critique the ‘invisibility’ of these antiracism structures in rural spaces.
Intimate solidarities: political care in the hosting of refugees

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Abstract

The past decade has seen the growth of grassroots refugee hosting organisations across the UK. Diverse in nature, size, and type, these organisations provide short-term accommodation for homeless asylum seekers and refugees, and represent a critical voluntary response to refugee homelessness. Building on feminist accounts of the intimate, this paper advances understanding of how these programmes of hosting, which rely upon embodied contact across distinctions of citizenship status, develop openings for solidarity between citizens and non-citizens. Working towards an account of ‘intimate solidarities’, the paper explores the ethical and political commitments of hosting and how these serve to bring global displacement ‘home’ in diverse ways, drawing connections between practices of solidarity that have often been abstractly positioned beyond the space of the home. In exploring the work of three UK hosting organisations, the paper considers hosting schemes as precarious forms of social infrastructure that connect the political exclusions of asylum with the material and emotional practices of home-making. In doing so, the paper considers both how understandings of home and hospitality are questioned, modified, and reiterated through exposure to the violence of borders, and how forms of political mobilisation emerge from the intimacies of hosting as a practice of care. Focusing on intimate solidarities thus enables a concern with how hosting may open pathways to other frames of advocacy and activism, as global connections of displacement are made present in domestic life.
A cultural geopolitics of hosting.

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Abstract

In this paper we explore geopolitical understandings of hosting. We start from a recognition that whilst a growing body of geographical literature has explored the geopolitics of home, this has yet to be substantially brought into conversation with hosting. The geopolitics of home literature has centred upon the wide variety of ways in which the home is political, whereas literature on hosting has tended to focus on the empirics of, for example, tourism case studies. This is important to address because of the plethora of work in political geography emerging on hospitality and the politics of asylum, and hospitality and conflict, does not significantly engage with political geographical scholarship on home as a site of cultural and geopolitical analysis. It is our contention that an attention to - what we term a cultural geopolitics of hosting - would enrichen and enliven geographical literature by bringing together the rich seam of literature exploring the cultural geopolitics of home with the less cohesive literature on hosting.

Our argument for a cultural geopolitics of hosting is emergent from, and grounded within, two illustrative examples (1) Olivia’s experiences of staying in Palestinian homestays, and (2) Sarah’s hosting of refugees in the UK. We noted how a framework to discuss the cultures and politics of hosting was absent from geographical literature and in this paper we demonstrate how a braiding of these literatures is productive for enhancing geographical analysis of hosting, including intersections with literature on home, hospitality and homestays.
Participatory Archiving as Insider Action Research in Urban Housing Movements

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Abstract

Ireland has seen the emergence of an organised and highly active housing movement that cohered in the years of austerity that followed the Global Financial Crash in 2008 (Kitchin et al., 2015).

Through years of urban crises, the Irish housing movement has responded with large-scale direct collective actions that have included occupying buildings and blocking evictions (O’Callaghan et al., 2018).

As an urban geographer researching how housing activists have understood and challenged processes of urban vacancy and dereliction in that time, I face two challenges.

The first is an entangled postionality (Anderson, 2002) as an insider who has participated in housing movement direct actions, and the second is a reluctance within the housing movement to collaborate in sustained academic research.

To mediate these issues, I have adopted a Participant Action Research (PAR) approach for my project, building on my proximity to the research setting and inhabiting a dual role as both participant and researcher (Coghlan and Shani, 2008), by forming a collaborative partnership between my project and the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU). The terms of this partnership involve the co-construction of a participatory archive which will house the data I collect, and which CATU will institutionally own and manage following the completion of my project.

Participatory archives are defined by a contextualisation of both records and process, where knowledge is co-represented, authority is negotiated, and control is shared (Duranti and Franks, 2015).

There are several exciting implications and opportunities afforded by this research strategy; it allows for a formal and easily understood PAR agreement, it gives the potential for ongoing access and centralised data collection (pending a continuously successful ongoing negotiation), but most interestingly, CATU will tangibly benefit with the retention of a material and immaterial infrastructure of record management and memory work that allows for the housing movement participants to claim the authority and rights to represent themselves, and mobilise an active “history of the present” (Burgum, 2020).
The deferred violence of aerial assaults on Gaza

Mark Griffiths
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Abstract

In this exploratory paper I consider the residues of harmful weapons that remain in the soil and aquifer with reference to reports of carcinogenic and teratogenic effects among the population of Gaza. I argue that attending to these effects revises our understandings of modern military operations in terms of time and space. Spatially, while analyses of war tend to look upwards, to apprehend harm in its fullness involves consideration of the ground below where toxic remnants leach and seep. Temporally, harm unfolds over months, years, generations, emerging through radioactive decay, genetic mutation, cellular dysfunction. Explicating these effects I attempt to sketch out a time-space of military assault capable of documenting and examining the environmental and public health legacies of weapons residue in Gaza (and beyond).
Squatting and the State: Resilient Property in an Age of Crisis

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Abstract

While the tensions between settlers/squatters/trespassers and land speculators are as old as the property law that emerged to govern land rights, the twenty-first century has been defined by a range of acute property challenges that have brought these to the fore: rising inequality, affordable housing crises, land use and sustainability crises, uneven economic growth, and financial and economic recessions; all heightened in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. These are cut across by proprietary and territorial anxieties: the sharpening of private property rights, and new moral panics linked to migration, identity and exclusion. Large-scale property problems generate existential pressures on governments. Yet, the dominant narratives, theories, approaches and methodologies of property theories and property law typically ‘look away from’ the role of the state, or rely on imagined (Hegelian, Aristotelian, Lockean) models when conceptualising the challenges and crises they face. Resilient Property offers a new methodological and theoretical framework for analysing state responses to squatting. Drawing on case studies from the U.S., Spain, Ireland, South Africa and England, and with insights from wicked problem theory, vulnerability theory and equilibrium theory, it examines how state responses to squatting are determined, not only by their likely impacts on the resilience of competing stakeholders (squatters, owners, neighbours, communities, markets and social movements) but by the state’s own resilience needs, as state actors and institutions (national and local) seek to maintain or restore systemic equilibrium.
Connecting men “to what matters to them”? social prescribing, inequality and the search for spaces to flourish in the north of England.

Adam Mars
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Abstract

Men are often discussed as “reluctant health seekers”, with conventional care and health seeking pathways often placed in opposition to the internalised standards and norms contained within dominant ideas of masculinity. Despite this, many men claim to feel more comfortable engaging in “sub-clinical” pathways to health, with recent evidence demonstrating the success of interventions orientated around spaces deemed consistent with ideas of masculinity, including interventions associated with local football clubs or tied towards traditional male practices of joinery or woodwork. As a “sub clinical” and community-based policy or intervention, social prescribing has an opportunity to engage men in leisure activities that can support and sustain wellbeing.

The aim of the presentation is to present emerging themes from the broader PhD project on northern men’s engagement in a variety of social prescribing programmes. Using qualitative thematic analysis, the project was designed with the aim of securing a detailed and nuanced account of the social prescribing journey. Its main analytical focus is to assess if social prescribing can provide a secure place, both inner and outer, to reattach, attune or flourish; or, rather, if social prescribing represents a continued impinging object relation that reproduces both inner and outer alienation under neoliberalism. By documenting journeys through varied social prescribing programmes, ranging from poetry, art, bereavement to signposting under the constraints of place-based inequality, the paper will provide a spectrum of experiences from around the north, offering an insight into whether social prescribing, consistent with its purported aims, offers men real power and autonomy to transform their relationship to health and wellbeing.
Dis-spelling property: Children’s magical boundary crossings

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Abstract

What is a wall to a child? It may be an obstacle course, a balance beam, a ‘car’, a seat, a home for spiders and ladybugs, a place to play hide and seek, a support to lean on when learning to walk, a perch for cats, a musical instrument to be played with sticks and hands. Rather than just a barrier, the wall can also become an incitement to explore that which lies beyond it. So how does a wall become just a territorial marker – a designation of private property, an imposing boundary line that cuts through space, dividing mine and yours? And what can children’s engagement with the boundary, and the legalized attempts to prevent and punish their boundary-crossing, tell us about the social work of private property? In addressing these questions, we aim to take seriously the iterative ‘why?’ of small children when confronted with territorial rules and related violence.
**Trespass, property and ownership at the Black Heart of Australia**

**Amelia Thorpe**  
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**Abstract**

In 2015, trespass was used to evict a group of Indigenous people from a site in a gentrifying area in inner city Sydney. What made this unusual was that it was not just the trespassers who were Indigenous: the landowner is the Aboriginal Housing Corporation (AHC), and the site is the Block, one of the most recognisably Indigenous across urban Australia (described in its heritage listing as the “Black Heart” of the country). The trespassers had set up a “tent embassy” in protest at the AHC’s plans for the site, claiming these plans were at odds with the AHC’s mandate and with the nature of the site as Indigenous land. The AHC’s response, upheld by the NSW Supreme Court, is that the site is private property, making it theirs to develop as they wish. The case is useful in highlighting the disconnect between understandings of property and understandings of ownership. While particularly acute at the Block, this problem is by no means limited to Indigenous land. In this paper I reflect on the history of the block to examine the limitations of legal ownership, and the disconnect between property and the multiple traditions, social norms and relationships that variously shape the way in which we understand rights and responsibilities in relation to land. As differing conceptions of property in the Block are brought into stark competition, it is interesting to try to conceptualise how systems of property and planning might better accommodate the social, relational and historical realities of land.
New Geographies for Regional Development Beyond the City Region: South of Scotland and the Borderlands

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Abstract

Regional inequalities have recently attracted increasing attention in policy and research. The variety of places having been ‘left behind’ includes old industrial regions, but also more peripheral and non-urban places.

In the United Kingdom, attempts to respond to these inequalities have entailed an ongoing ‘churn’ in scales and forms of economic governance at the sub-national level. As in other countries, this has seen city-regions presented as the preferred scale for economic development policy. While to some extent driven by ‘top down’ priorities of the centre, the particular geographies and configurations emerging from episodes of rescaling are however constructed through contested political processes across multiple scales, and interactions with existing spatial arrangements.

This paper provides insights into these processes through tracing the emergence of two new and overlapping spaces for strategic interventions in a peripheral region. These have seen a dedicated development agency established for the largely rural South of Scotland, and a ‘deal’ for strategic investment by different levels of government across a large area straddling the Scotland-England border. These must be seen in the context of the UK’s acute geographical inequalities and centralised governance, but also its evolving system of asymmetric devolution and specific political debates around possible Scottish independence.

These episodes of rescaling demonstrate how regional actors can exercise agency in shaping governance arrangements by articulating regional ‘problems’, and their preferred solutions, with political concerns of the centre, where specific windows of opportunity arise. It also indicates the potential for established understandings of regional development to be challenged where models based on a city-regional imaginary are adapted to a non-urban context.

While these emerging arrangements offer at least the potential for regional actors to harness resources for place-based development, they also entail their own tensions, as part of an increasingly fragmented landscape of regional development policy and governance.
From post-political to authoritarian planning in England, a crisis of legitimacy

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Abstract

In this paper, we argue that the crisis of post-politics has sparked an authoritarian turn in spatial planning in England. That, the proposed reform of the English planning system in 2020 is a defining moment, marking not only the failure of consensus-seeking politics in governing dissents, but also the rising authoritarian responses to fix it. This is manifest in the intensification of state control, strengthening of executive power and decline of democratic institutions, with a shift of emphasis from techno-managerial to executive-punitive practices, and from seemingly consensual to openly antagonistic approaches. The drift has been justified by invoking a ‘state of exception’ whereby the established rules and procedures are displaced by the appeal to ‘exceptional’ circumstances such as national securities. Drawing on a case study of shale gas ‘fracking’ in England we show how authoritarianism has crept into planning processes through, changes in legislation, reconfiguration of rules, rescaling of decision making, and shrinking of democratic spaces. We discuss the role of a ‘political moment’ in the politicization of fracking, arguing that the return of the political has engendered antagonistic and exclusionary practices, rather than the agonistic pluralism that planning scholars have called for. In managing planning conflicts, consent, compromise and cooption are increasingly complemented or replaced by discipline, control and explicit exclusion. Instead of denying, neutralizing or suppressing antagonism by calling for consensus, authoritarian politics exaggerates it by establishing frontiers between legitimate and non-legitimate voices of dissents. We conclude by suggesting that the authoritarian turn can only offer a contingent and fleeting solution to the failure of post-political planning to deliver neoliberal pro-growth goals. It cannot eradicate the crisis of legitimacy in planning; nor can it foreclose the political struggle for fixing its meaning and purpose.
Youth and the work/housing nexus: concepts and empirical findings

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Abstract

Ethiopia and South Africa’s youth experience high unemployment and often lack affordable housing (Charlton, 2018; Kinfu et al, 2019; Meth and Buthelezi, 2017; Rubin and Charlton, 2019). A surge of interest in youth unemployment globally (see World Bank report ‘Development and the next generation’, 2006), focuses on youth’s role in accelerating growth in poverty contexts (Ayele et al, 2017). Despite this focus on youth unemployment (Gebremariam, 2017), connections between work and housing are less well understood but remain critical to youth futures. In Hawassa, Ethiopia, recent investment in Africa’s largest industrial complex offers low wage work for some while ongoing investment in education for many youth seemingly results in few formal work outcomes. Simultaneously a scarcity of housing and high cost of existing stock constrains sustainable futures for youth. In Ekangala, South Africa, waning investment in the former industrial site of Ekandustria, inhibits youth employment. Yet, provision of state housing means some youth are housed, but cannot afford living costs and rely heavily on welfare transfers. This complex relationship between youth, work and housing is under-theorised, particularly in terms of youth and state/private sector’s responses. Youths’ shaping of their work/housing experiences themselves, albeit within constraints, reveals innovation, but uncritical promotion of individualised youth creativity (such as entrepreneurship) underplays structural economic and political constraints and opportunities. We examine the youth work/housing nexus across structural processes and agentic practices, proposing a conceptual framework for analysing this work/housing nexus, and drawing on wider empirical evidence from Hawassa and Ekangala to explore its tenets.
Neoliberal-Patriarchal Crisis in Turkey: Young Women's (Im)mobility, Work, and Body in the city

Hilal Kara
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Abstract

Situating itself within the context of the ongoing social and economic crisis in the relations of production and social reproduction in Turkey, where anti-labour and conservative-authoritarian politics predominantly shape everyday life, this paper seeks to understand the contestations and negotiations focusing on relationalities and connections between young women graduates’ work, urban experiences and (im)mobility in the city. Drawing on 50 in-depth interviews with young women graduates, who are precarious workers and out of work, this paper argues that given the neoliberal-patriarchal crisis in Turkey, the authoritarian-patriarchal state is utilizing oppressive apparatuses to surveil and control women’s work, body, and mobility in the city. Aside from the state, fathers, male coworkers, employers, and husbands as the agents of the authoritarian-conservative structure perpetuate surveillance, control, and disciplining mechanisms over women. However, young women, going beyond being victimized subjects, produce alternative socio-spatial relationships and networks in the entanglements of work, body, and the city as a response to precarization and exploitation of their work by the oppressive and exploitative agents.
Unravelling the gendered livelihood strategies of young migrant women and men in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Elizabeth Dessie
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Abstract

Despite a large portion of low-income dwellers hailing from rural areas in many sub-Saharan African countries, the plight of rural migrants in African cities has not received sufficient attention in research. This omission is particularly noticeable in relation to the lives of young rural women and girls who often migrate to cities within contexts of rural household economic insecurity and social distress. This paper presents the findings of a PhD research project focused on the gendered livelihood strategies of young women and men from rural areas living and working in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Drawing on qualitative empirical data selected in two neighbourhoods of the capital, findings uncovered point to explicit differences in income-earning activities, asset ownership as well as broader livelihood outcomes. While the pressures of high living costs compounded by an absence of employment opportunities are felt both by migrant women and men, distinctions in these subjective experiences point towards the structural disadvantage faced by young rural women and girls throughout their urban lives, as well as in the process of migration itself. Findings uncovered in this study highlight the centrality of migrant experiences in understanding the intersections of gender, age, class and migrant status in producing and re-producing new layers of inequality in a rapidly changing sub-Saharan African city.
Rejecting caste and class in vocational training in India’s juvenile justice system:

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Abstract

Vocational training has been at the center of India’s juvenile justice system since its very inception. The rationale that has informed vocational training in juvenile institutions, including child protection institutions, is that training equips children to have a source of livelihood once they leave the institutions. However, in the last two decades, the juvenile justice system has increasingly framed vocational training as containing not just economic but therapeutic benefits. Drawing on ethnographic research and analysis of policy documents, my paper looks at how juvenile justice staff frame vocational education as enabling the healing of girls who are detained in child protection institutions as victims of sexual violence. With interviews with the staff and the girls detained in a child protection institution in Delhi, India, I look at how the staff find themselves feeling confounded when girls reject both vocational training and its promised therapeutic benefits. My paper argues that girls’ rejection of the therapeutic promises of vocational training is a rejection of the limited futures that vocational training programs attempt to funnel them into. By drawing attention to girls’ acts of rejection, my paper articulates a critique of the caste-based division of labor that underlies vocational training initiatives in child protection institutions.
More-than-human ‘vibrant material’ assemblages for just transitions

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Abstract

The global political economic drive towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions provides numerous opportunities for creating transformative social and cultural responses to the climate crisis. Climate change interconnects with social and environmental crises such as poverty, war, hunger, and biodiversity loss, which are often products of deep-seated, multi-scalar inequalities (racial, gender, socioeconomic). A ‘just transition’, which seeks to eliminate inequalities by uniting climate, energy, and environmental justice, asserts that addressing the climate crisis is not indifferent, but integral to creating a just society. Formulating strategies and actions for just transitions requires an overhaul in how humans relate to non-human or more-than-human entities that result from complex social, cultural, and ecological intersections. This paper proposes a theoretical-methodological framework to investigate these intersections that combines Manuel DeLanda’s assemblage theory with Jane Bennett’s “vibrant materialism”, and action research. This approach can provide effective, holistic responses to the climate crisis by (a) describing how “capacities” between heterogeneous entities can interact or cooperate, for example the mutual interactions between creative arts practice, envisioning ‘green jobs’ of the future, reducing socio-economic inequalities, and instigating human-environmental relationships that benefit biodiversity; (b) focusing on the distribution of agency across living and non-living things to animate new directions for more-than-human political ecological responses to climate change; and (c) revealing how just, sustainable climate futures can emerge from individual and collective actions across social, political, national, and economic boundaries.
Digital Heritage and Storytelling: The Youth's Vision of Beirut's Contested past

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Abstract

This presentation introduces a framework for an intervention that will build the capacity of the youth to participate in preserving Lebanon's heritage. We investigate how the process of memorizing history involves overviews and inclusions that fit a temporal setting. This, in return, requires a process that repetitively reviews Lebanon’s collective identity and facilitates the imagining of a collective future. we aim to empower the youth to narrate and visualize their heritage through their own lenses. We argue that despite the sectarian politics in action, enabling the youth to voice their narratives of the lived everyday contestation could herald their substantial contribution to the city's urban reconciliation and peace-making with the past. We employed participatory arts and humanities research and digital storytelling to enable the youth to reflect on their individual interpretation of contestation and what elements of the local contested heritage are authentic. In addition, the authenticity of contested pasts is gained through lived space and experience as we engage with emerging work that grasps authenticity as a subject of performance, negotiation, and experience.
Sanitising a City?: Visualising the intersect between flooding, urbanisation and sanitation in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Harri Hudson
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Abstract

In this project I analyse urban environmental change through the lens of the effects of flooding to explore the interconnections of water, infrastructure, and humans. I look to explore what cultural and institutional barriers may exist in solid waste management and sanitary infrastructure development to understand and produce an everyday perspective of Phnom Penh’s flooding, through incorporating interviews with ethnography, participatory mapping, and crowdsourced GIS. I analyse perspectives of flooding from the media to NGOs, to residents and how this reflects lived realities of waterside dwellers. I focus on dwellers along Phnom Penh’s central canals as my core participants, among which their varied experience of sanitation infrastructure allows for insight into the inequalities in health and sanitation of urban poor dwellers. In doing so, I will contribute to the understanding of networked social-environmental flows of water and explore how analysing waste can enhance this understanding. Thus far, this project has identified areas of key flood risk that will only exacerbate with climate change and urban expansion that is replacing the city’s wetlands that function as natural sewage treatment and stormwater buffers. Where flood risk increases, people’s health and sanitation are at greater risk as Phnom Penh’s infrastructure grapples with solid waste clean-up that integrates with liquid waste flows particularly during the Cambodian monsoon season. Further to conducting fieldwork from June, this project contributes to broadening the understanding of waste, flows of water, and will do so through a grounded lens of participatory interviews, mapping, and photography.
Insights into ‘therapeutic’ complexities: implications for social prescribing

Annabelle Edwards
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Abstract

In this paper I draw upon novel phenomenological research conducted across three different types of ‘therapeutic landscape’: conservation volunteering groups, walking groups, and residential meditation retreats (2015-2020). This research brought together auto-phenomenology, in the form of my own extended participation in these activities/groups, and phenomenologically-focused semi-structured interviews with others (n=20) also engaged in these activities/groups.

The data gained through this research, and through an engagement with critical phenomenological and post-phenomenological theory (e.g., Ahmed, 2004: 2006; Wylie, 2006), provides considerable insight into the complexity and individual-specificity of ‘therapeutic landscape’ experiences. In this paper, I will attend specifically to the process of experiential emergence, and will consider how ‘therapeutic landscape’ experiences come to be, and how they vary between people and over-time. Looking forward, I will consider what these insights into complexity and individual-specificity mean for the development of social prescribing, and will outline potential avenues for future research.

References:


Artist-run Initiatives: What's the Point?

Dan Goodman
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Abstract

In recent decades the term ‘artist-run’ has been used to describe self-organised activity by creative practitioners that can take many forms – amongst them galleries, studios, workshops, zines, archives, and radio stations. They often operate in non-commercial contexts and serve as an alternative to, or at times in opposition of, the social hierarchies and conditions imposed by the institutional art system. These initiatives individually or as part of an informal network of initiatives, can generate a critical mass of support, experimentation, and expertise. Despite the institutional art world being reliant on this broader creative culture fostering new ideas and practices, it often overlooks and undervalues the role of the artist-run in the arts ecology. The aspects that are highlighted by funders and institutions, tend to be those which can be most easily reframed within economics-based arts development models.

This autoethnographic study is informed by my experiences of running System, an artist-run gallery. Like many artist-run initiatives System has operated out of Meanwhile Spaces – these are co-opted underused urban spaces secured through temporary contracts and tacit agreements with landlords. This study argues that informality, reactivity, and temporality can be prime drivers in empowering emerging creative practitioners to be active co-conspirators in identity and community building. By using various arts-practice based research methods to explore how questions of value intertwine with lived-experience and self-narrative, this paper seeks to inform understandings of cultural ecosystems and what it potentially means to be part of the social worlds contained within them.
Becoming-digital: Logistical media, territorial mutations, and the production of information space in the port of Piraeus, Greece

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Abstract

The Belt and Road Initiative, China’s global infrastructure development strategy, involves over 3000 projects worth over US$4bn across more than 70 countries. Its sea route part, the so-called Maritime Silk Road, represents a major logistical expansion that largely connects to ports and associated infrastructure along its route. Meanwhile, the dramatic rise of digital technologies in the shipping and logistics sector, dubbed ‘Logistics 4.0’ by management and logistics pundits, is now widely understood as no less than part of a fourth industrial revolution. ‘Becoming-digital’ looks at the techno-territorial configurations taking place in the Greek port of Piraeus, a key node in the maritime component of the BRI which is operated since 2016 by the Chinese state-owned COSCO Shipping. COSCO has overseen the port’s container terminal’s digitalisation and overall upgrade, a process accelerated in the wake of the pandemic. Through the Piraeus case the paper studies how new digital platforms and operating systems transform port operations, as well as the ensuing tensions and frictions related to the complex knot of territorial, jurisdictional, and political arrangements governing port spaces. Bringing together and extending recent contributions to critical logistics, media and infrastructure studies, and political and digital geography, the paper uses logistics as a lens to study the production of such nascent information spaces: their mixed and hybrid constitution as well as the complex ways in which different actors, technical standards and information vectors articulate themselves and clash with one another. The Piraeus case promises to enhance our understanding of logistics’ entanglement with technological shifts, territorial mutations, and state restructuring.
Resilient youth? Day to day realities of young people in Urban Ethiopia and South Africa

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Abstract

Young people are often praised for their resilience. Their ability to find and make their way in perverse and difficult circumstances despite hugely adverse and challenging conditions. In many ways, resilience is almost seen as a characteristic of youth. Looking at two groups of young people, one in Hawassa, Ethiopia and the other in Ekangala, South Africa, utilizing a mixed method approach that included, surveys, life history interviews and focus groups, the paper examines the forms of resilience that young people display. It looks at the networks and social contacts that they draw on to be able to survive despite high rates of joblessness and unemployment, and the personal resources and reservoirs that they call on. The paper also looks at the important differences between how young men and women navigate their lived realities and the difficulties of their day to day. However, the paper also questions the notions of resilience and the expectation that is put on young people to be resilient in the face of significant life challenges. Instead of locating responsibility and agency just on young people, the paper also demonstrates that the structural environment is often disempowering and thwarts young people’s agency and that the resilience lens can put unrealistic expectations on young people and their ability to thrive in a post-recovery world.
Loss and gain: A study exploring the experiences of learners from underserved communities in Pune, India, during the pandemic

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Abstract

The pandemic has resulted in nation-wide lockdowns worldwide, and countries like India shut down 1.5 million schools and educational institutions for more than 52 weeks, severely impacting the learning of 247 million children across the country (UNICEF, 2021). Educational institutions provide crucial learning opportunities for young people, and when they are closed, young people are deprived of prospects for growth and development. In India, pandemic-related closures have hindered opportunities for young people both educationally and emotionally. As a result, they could not gain the critical 21st-century skills necessary to prepare them for a hyper-digital future for almost two years. The world may have moved to remote learning, but in India, where the government spends only about 3% of the nation’s GDP on education and only half the population has access to the Internet, 320 million students have already been left behind.

While several recent studies have explored the broader impact of the pandemic and disrupted learning, we want to understand the specific challenges of learners from underserved communities. Our research will explore the learning experiences of learners from urban slum communities in Pune, India, who enrolled in a community-led, online learning programme during the pandemic to advance their digital and coding skills. Through qualitative interviews, we will explore how the learners aged 15-24 navigated the pandemic, job losses and sickness in the family while coming to grips with the lack of infrastructure, including meaningful internet connectivity and basic electricity in their communities. Our research will inform broader research around online and blended learning opportunities for learners from disadvantaged communities and how community-led educational programmes can bridge the gap in critical 21st-century skills for these learners.
Racing drag to Italy: Selective travels of queerness and race across the Drag Race franchise

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Abstract

In 2021, the first season of Drag Race Italia was broadcasted. As part of the US-based Ru Paul’s Drag Race franchise, the show adopted formulae and tropes of its American antecedent, transposing them in an Italian context. Cultural and political reflections around race, which have gained importance in American editions, were completely absent from the Italian show. Presenting an analysis of some episodes from the show, this paper explores these processes of partial translation. It focuses on the elements that are allowed to travel from one regional/linguistic context to the other, and those that get stuck in the process. Building on the concept of ‘travelling theories’, the paper highlights how (a certain strand of) popularised drag culture loses some of its radical anti-racist potential in its inter-regional travelling. It interrogates how some Italian LGBT communities and representations maintain structures of racial exclusion by reinforcing the myth of a ‘raceless Italy’. Through this discussion, it argues for an understanding of Italian queerness that takes into account the complex, specific and often hidden processes of racialisation at work in the country and it advocates for a deep interrogation of the silences maintained around race and racism.
Supporting Just Response and Recovery to COVID-19 in Informal Urban Settlements: Perspectives from Youth Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

The paper will present the results of a collaborative project carried out by youth members of the Slum Dwellers International’s federation across eight cities in Sub-Saharan Africa and researchers from the University of Warwick and Nottingham / Open University, which sought to amplify youth voices throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, it aimed to address the ethics and justice issues arising from differential impacts of the pandemic and associated policy responses on young people living in informal settlements, in interaction with pre-existing structural injustices. Starting from the premise that young people matter and are too often ignored in decision-making and planning for economies and societies they will inherit (Brody, 2021), the paper explores the young peoples’ perspectives from the vantage points of their multiple roles as students, entrepreneurs, caregivers, volunteers, breadwinners, film-makers and local knowledge experts. Through the use of video and audio interviews conducted between over 60 members of SDI youth federations and community youth leaders in 2020-2021, we examine the influence of the pandemic on young peoples’ agency and identity and how this has been shaped by the differing political contexts that made up the project. This includes reflecting on the role of our project in supporting young peoples’ aspirations to develop media and advocacy work, whilst working within a research-driven framework. We reflect on the tension between projecting young peoples’ creativity, resilience and innovation, whilst acknowledging exclusionary practice and deep, ongoing structural constraints.
The Five Stickiest Changes to Education Post COVID-19

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Abstract

In November of 2020, nearly a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, it was impossible to deny that the traditional model of education needed to change. Closing schools to in-person learning had shone a bright spotlight on pervasive systemic inequities. Historically marginalized communities suffered from lack of access to technology services. In addition to academics, vital community services such as, childcare, regular meals, and social interaction, were suddenly unavailable. Sensing that change was inevitable, I wondered:

“What are the five stickiest changes to education that will come about as a result of COVID-19?”

After conducting a series of interviews with teachers, students, administrators, education designers, and education service providers from around the world the five stickiest changes emerged. The changes are, learn anywhere learn anytime, personalized learning, quality of life, stay open school design, and to test or not to test. A pandemic that has shattered our concept of a normal education is now inviting us to create a new normal. The five changes are a glimpse at the potential new normal. As one interviewee puts it “four walls are not going to be able to contain young people, or their learning.”

In this session we will explore each change through the lens of social and environmental justice.
‘This settlement is just our launch pad to move to the city’: Radical-temporal perception of place among young Malawian migrants in Zimbabwe’s Norton peri-urban

Johannes Bhanye
University of the Free State, South Africa

Abstract

Today, there are more young people in the world than ever, 1.8 billion, the largest generation in history. Of the annual total of 214 million international migrants globally, young people constitute more than 11 percent, yet too little is known about their struggles and experiences, particularly in the dangerous African city. Based on ethnographic fieldwork, this paper gives an account on the radical-temporal perception of place among young Malawian diaspora living in a peri-urban squatter settlement in Zimbabwe. Contrary to the perceptions of first-generation migrants about place, the youths regard their squatter settlement as just a launch pad to move to the city. They dream to leave their natal place because of rough living conditions as opposed to the conveniences offered by cities. Their target destinations vary from nearby towns to as far as metro-cities of neighbouring countries like South Africa. The journey to the final preferred destination may be long, meandering, and grim, but some are ready to endure it. With enough migration infrastructures like social networks, family support, and migrant’s skills, a wish to migrate could be converted into successful migration. After migrating, some make social investments in the form of remittances and other customary obligations back in the squatter settlement, while others never return home. Failed migration and trailing back home by some, is not the end point. Rather, it is to cushion them as they make further plans for a future elsewhere. This increasingly mobile young African population is a matter calling for urgent policy intervention.
Recovery as Spatial Justice: looking at Business Rescue from a Legal Geography perspective

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Abstract

The chair’s theme invites reflections on how communities and environments recuperate, repair and transform after disasters. The central problem of this paper is the way in which recovery is simultaneously facilitated and stifled by legal processes. The aim is to think about recovery at the intersection between law, business and space.

The process of Business Rescue, as an alternative to liquidation proceedings for corporations in financial distress, can be described as the “legal ICU bed” for corporations. This is an apt metaphor for thinking about recovery in the context of Mercantile Law. However, the legal requirements for Business Rescue proceedings in South Africa, governed by chapter 6 of the Companies Act 71 of 2008, despite having moved from a narrow shareholder model to a broader stakeholder model, still do not take account of the broader relational aspects that determine the recovery of businesses. I argue that these proceedings lose sight of spatial justice and that legal geography can augment these proceedings. I will look at Business Rescue trends in the time before, during and after the pandemic to interrogate the role of law in enabling recovery. The understanding of Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos of spatial justice as the struggle of various bodies to occupy a certain space at a certain time” (Spatial Justice: Body, Lawscape, Atmosphere, 2015) is central to conceptualising the Business Rescue process in relational and spatial terms. Spatial justice highlights the double-handedness of recovery interventions such as Business Rescue and shows how ideas and practices of recovery can be both tyrannical and emancipatory. Writing within this legal geography background, from the perspective of critical Mercantile Law, I will argue that the current context presents a valuable opportunity for corporations and the corporate form, not to return to business as usual.
Dataility and the city: Digital dating apps in Mumbai

Kavita Dattani
Queen Mary, University of London, UK

Abstract

In this paper, I magnify the role of data to examine the co-constitutive, socio-spatial relationship between dating apps and the city of Mumbai. Departing from discussions on ‘Big Data’, I follow Mertia (2020) in considering the broader social ‘lives of data’ on and off the dating app. First, I draw on interviews with women and gender minority dating app users and company executives to argue that the construction of how datable one is on a dating app relies on data, constituting a double-entendre and a new techno-hierarchy of datability. Second, I show how dating app companies co-create an image of datability in the city through their published media and advertisements depicting the wealthier parts of the city. I discuss how dating app users correspond to this media in their aspirations to be proximate to these spaces. Third, I show how data infrastructures on dating apps are engaged with by users who adopt digital-spatial tactics that resemble processes of urban enclaving in the city of Mumbai, moving from the ‘crowded’ spaces of Tinder to the ‘clean’ spaces of Hinge, an app on which social identity can be read more easily.
Disrupting space: Environmental education from home during a pandemic

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Abstract

This paper discusses participatory action research with high school children during the earlier phase of the global pandemic in 2020. It deals with the question of how digital platforms and devices enable environmental education for children who study from home in Indonesia during the pandemic. Furthermore, it also explains the consequences of how the concept of home and space has been adapted in this new learning environment.

The unpreparedness of high school teachers to shift into online teaching has become the biggest challenge to the learning process and this becomes the impetus of my collaborative research with the children and their teachers. Through an online environmental education program, the teachers allow me to invite their pupils to map their daily lives and relationships with non-human objects at home. The children participate remotely through mobile technology such as smartphones, laptops, and computers. Using a specially-designed digital module, the children are able to draw, sketch or write their experiences and document their activities. From the mapping process, I found how the children see the home spatialities differently, as an assemblage of human/nonhuman relations in which they become inseparable parts. In this process, the digital platforms and alternative conceptual framing enable the children to perceive their homes as space for learning about broader environmental issues in the light of Anthropocentrism while also to reflect on their desires, emotions, and vulnerabilities.

The pandemic has brought the inevitable and necessary disruption to the learning process in environmental education for the students working in my research. Digital devices have enabled the formation of an alternative perspective that is imperative to challenge the current dominant education practices that ignore the interrelation between children and nonhuman others.
Adapting schooling for rural children in post-lockdown Lesotho: action research with trainee teachers

Nicola Ansell
Brunel University, UK

Abstract

Research undertaken in 2016-9 revealed the extent to which primary schooling in Lesotho is disconnected from the everyday experiences of rural children. Schooling is seen both by teachers and children as an acquisition of abstract knowledge of relevance only in relation to elusive futures in urban formal sector careers. The research highlighted the potential role of teachers in connecting schooling with children’s current and future lives.

In January 2020 we applied for follow-on-funding to work with trainee teachers through an action research approach to explore ways of relating education to rural children. Trainees were to work with experienced graduate teachers to identify and test innovative strategies to deliver the curriculum in more meaningful ways. The funding was awarded but Covid intervened, delaying the start of the project, restricting activities but also presenting new challenges and possibilities for rural education. In this paper we report on a preliminary analysis of the trainee teachers’ project reports.
Neo-liberal authoritarianism: a political ecology approach that advance for just transitions in Ghana.

David Ayiine-Etigo
University of Aberdeen, UK

Abstract

Neo-liberal authoritarianism that competes against populist ecologies are a global phenomenon and yet there is an insignificant scholarly interest in the interrelationship between populist authoritarian climate policies and the environment especially in Africa. Neo-liberal authoritarianism can advance articulation that do not promote just transitions, especially in the Global South. The aim of this paper therefore is to present an emancipatory form of populist ecology proposed in Ghana through a Gramscian lens that opposes a form of neo-liberal authority in the Renewable energy Act of Ghana. The paper formed a Public Political Ecology inquiry, a theoretically informed investigation to make up a Community of Praxis by engaging with stakeholders in and outside formal governmental institutions. By so doing we are drawing from Antonio Gramsci’s work on philosophy of praxis. From the view of Gramscian ideas class hegemony is defined not by exclusion but inclusion that the paper proposes to advance articulations for just transitions. Through the Renewable Energy Act of Ghana, ‘class participation’ mirror Gramsci’s work that defines a ‘people nation’ to mean the popular sovereignty of a nation resides in its people, not on exclusionary nationalism or nation state and one that is capable of confronting authoritarian populism, and this resonates in Ghana as ‘we the people’, ‘the liberatory struggle’ that emanate from institutional subjectivities despite embattled and remains an authentic collective of an identity, a nation-state, as opposed to outsiders, elites (neo-liberal authority) within the Renewable Energy Act 832 (2011) which is alien in Ghana. We the people simply means by the conception of a nation state where sovereign will resides with the people, it decolonises, transitions through institutional process that seeks to ‘culture fly’ in Ghana popular authoritarian processes in the Renewable Energy Act. In Ghana a Gramscian lens ‘open up new modes of thought’, empirical and from the Global South, on what just conceptions of transitions look like in their everyday lived experiences and inform praxis. The paper therefore practically implies progressive populism from a popular democratic process can contribute to framing just transitions from a governing process that integrates social justice and environmental sustainability.
Youth and Capability Development in Freetown, Maiduguri and Mogadishu: Dissecting political settlements, city as systems, and complex priority problems in three African cities

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Abstract

With the youngest population in the world, sub-Saharan Africa and its cities embody some of the most dynamic urban centres in the global South. Faced with limited access to formal employment, services, and living in contexts characterised by uncertainty and insecurity, sub-Saharan African youth must navigate the unknowns of a post-covid world while also dealing with an array of pre-existing social, economic and political pressures. The extent to which the lives of urban youth will be affected by shifting political discourses, a rapidly warming climate, and the after-effects of conflict remains to be seen. It is within this ambience of the unfamiliar that research must address existing knowledge gaps pertaining to youth in African cities that have been largely understudied. This paper presents findings from the African Cities Research Consortium’s (ACRC) work in three cities - Freetown, Sierra Leone, Maiduguri, Nigeria, and Mogadishu, Somalia. Using a political settlements lens to outline the systems of cities and the ways in which urban development domains are enveloped and intertwined, this paper will outline research outcomes from three geographically distinct cities where the youth question is as political as it is contested. These findings will be examined through the ACRC’s conceptual framework, designed to generate new knowledge that can inform policy initiatives and, in doing so, provide durable solutions to the complex priority problems that African cities are facing.
Abstract

In many grassroots communities in Africa, due to low access to quality education and the financial difficulties of families, young people have stunted early childhood development, lack employability skills and have poor access to technology, thus they find it hard to access topical information and educational opportunities. For example, the “Nigerian unemployment report 2020” prepared by the National Bureau of Statistics show that the unemployment rate among rural dwellers was 34.5%, while urban dwellers reported a rate of 31.3%.

In 2017, Prikkle Academy co-created a new way to address the challenge of access to quality education for children and youths, unemployment and skill development, in rural communities in Nigeria. We co-created a ‘school without teachers’ in form of a makerspace – an open innovation centre with rural children and youths in a community called Afon, Kwara State (North-Central, Nigeria) that can provide them with an opportunity to improve literacy and numeracy, plus learn the 21st-century skills that will prepare them for the future of jobs.

For out-of-school and in-school children and youths, the goal was to bring everyone together, to decentralize education (as it used to be several decades ago), to an open environment where they could freely express themselves, and tinker with different digital tools. Working with the local government, we were able to work with different community stakeholders, to identify and leverage on one of the assets – an abandoned public building – to create the open space.

With initial community funding, and later external grants, we equipped the makerspace with solar-power (due to epileptic electricity) and basic technological amenities - computers, internet, mechanical and technical tools, art collections etc.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck and all the schools were shut down, this centre became a place for children and youths to come to, at different times of the day, to continue to learn and connect with mentors and peers from other parts of the world.
Recovery for whom? The political geography of the Plymouth/Devon Freezone.

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University of Plymouth, UK

Abstract

Freeports are one of the government’s flagship policies for addressing chronic spatial inequality within the UK. Yet an analysis of the policy framework reveals that it is based on the same neoliberal philosophy that has allowed regional and social inequality to widen. This paper offers a critical analysis of the policy, and its rationale, combined with an in-depth analysis of the emergence of one of the eight new freeports in England, the Plymouth/Devon Freezone. In particular, it will explore how the national Freeport agenda relates to existing concepts and trajectories of development held by local actors and stakeholders. It will address the following questions: How is the national Freeport concept reconfigured at the local level, and what new synergies and tensions emerge? How have these tensions shaped the emergence and the establishment of the Plymouth/Devon Freezone? How have different stakeholders and interest groups within the region reacted to it? To what extent has the project exacerbated existing fissures, created new ones or served as a unifying force? How is it intended to reshape the economic and social geography of the region? Methodologically, it will engage in a framing and content analysis of national level documents and texts followed by an analysis of local level texts, supplemented by interviews with local stakeholders. The paper offers empirical findings and conceptual insights into the process by which national policies are enacted, resisted or adapted at the regional/local scale and the implications for understanding and tackling uneven development.
Towards a youth friendly Lagos: Visions and perceptions from the Lagos State Development Plan (2012-2025)

Taibat Lawanson, Victor Onifade, Damilola Olalekan
University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

The growing spate of youth-led urban protests around the world has necessitated a closer look at the place of youth in the city. With the demographic profile of Lagos tilting to a youth majority, it is necessary to understand their needs and aspirations – and the governance regimes required to meet these needs. This paper is an empirical study of the perspectives of young people about the Lagos State Development Plan and the imperatives for a youth friendly city.

The study begins with a content review of the LSDP based on a set of indicators drawn from literature, and a participatory mapping process which captured the opinions of 300 young people on the University of Lagos campus concerning their opinions of the LSDP, and the imperatives for a youth friendly city. The methodology borrowed from the global social change phenomenon where over 4000 “Before I die” walls were developed in over 75 countries (https://beforeidieproject.com/). This project provided a space where people could start a conversation on city visioning, and articulate their aspirations for a youth friendly city on public boards around the Campus. The study revealed wide discrepancies between the vision of the city and youth friendly indicators of access to public spaces, access to education and security.
Co-curating a ‘resource library’ on the migration-development nexus

Sarah Peck
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Abstract

This paper reflects on an ongoing collaborative project with a diaspora-led organisation working in the global development sector. The project aims to co-curate a ‘resource library’ (or archive) of the organisation’s work to date. Since the 1990s increasing attention has been paid to the migration-development nexus and within this the ways in which diasporic communities can shape global development thorough a variety of intersecting scales, modes and spatialities.

The development of the ‘resource library’ hopes to facilitate the telling of this organisation’s story – their work, contributions, struggles – contributing to understandings of the migration-development space. The co-curation (or co-creation) of archives is of increasing interest to geographers, seen as a research method that can lead to new insights, disrupt dominant narratives and challenge the boundaries of public and private knowledge (Brewis et al., 2021). This paper reflects on some of the key questions that have arisen in the first six months of this collaboration:

- What labour, for both the researcher and the collaborating organisation, is part of co-curating this resource library?
- What should be the role/position of the researcher in organising and reimagining the history of an organisation?
- How can this type of work contribute to disrupting dominant narratives on migration and development, particularly in the context of repair and transformation?

The paper then considers the relationships, power dynamics, ethics and in/exclusions that the process of co-curating a ‘resource library’ of material on the migration-development nexus creates.
Intersectionality of physical and digital spaces in primary education in Bangladesh during the pandemic: towards a blended-outdoor learning framework

Matluba Khan, Tom Smith
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

This paper will present the preliminary findings of a research project that examines crisis-led approaches to teaching and learning in Bangladesh in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and explores the potential for outdoor, blended learning approaches for future years in the context of South Asia. Education systems in low-income countries have responded to the pandemic with extremely limited resources, resulting in adaptive and unique approaches to teaching and learning (use of mobile phones; national television), but many children are missing out on critical periods of their education. In Bangladesh, smartphones are widespread, but few children have access to computers and quality internet connections. Equally, children living in dense urban environments have poor access to greenspaces and associated wellbeing benefits. Existing evidence suggests that learning in an outdoor environment can improve children’s academic attainment (Khan et al 2019) and improve their wellbeing, and this has potentials during a pandemic. We will present findings from a telephone survey conducted with 200 primary school teachers in Bangladesh of their experiences of teaching during the pandemic, how they navigated the digital and physical spaces of home and the community to continue the delivery of teaching. The findings from the study will help develop a framework to combine digital learning with outdoor learning for primary education in Bangladesh, as a response to crisis now and in future.

References:

Participatory research exploring university students’ perceptions of their campus as learning opportunity in an era of uncertainty

Jude Parks, Sophie Blackburn
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Abstract

With many young people today expressing anxiety around climate change, it is imperative that universities offer learning experiences that reflect these concerns, and embed the teaching of sustainability and justice issues throughout the curriculum (Sterling and Thomas 2006).

This paper will report on the participatory research phase of a cross-disciplinary project at a small English university, exploring student responses to the climate crisis and their expectations of their university to equip them as citizens and professionals in an age of uncertainty. Four projects each took forward one of the key findings of the first phase; the project that this paper focuses on was Humanities-based, led by a staff member with two Humanities student researchers.

The student researchers, supported by the staff member, designed, organised, recruited for, and conducted five focus groups with a total of 11 Humanities student peers. The focus groups explored participants’ perceptions of their university campus’ environmental practice as a learning opportunity in the context of climate and ecological concerns. The research was conducted early in 2021, in the context of the “overlapping crises” of the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change (Sultana, 2021), with continued disruption to university life requiring the research to be conducted largely online.

This paper will analyse participants’ knowledge of, responses to, actual and hoped for engagement with campus ‘green initiatives’. It will then discuss the value of the research, including how the findings have inspired actions, including the development of a ‘Living Lab’ pilot project involving ten modules across the university.

REFERENCES


Museums, care work and COVID-19 responses: exploring the impact on community engagement work and staff

Nuala Morse
University of Leicester, UK

Abstract

The presentation reflects on a range of UK museum and gallery outreach activity that took place during COVID-19 lockdowns led by community engagement teams. This included creative packs sent to people who were shielding, online sessions for mental health service users, and phone services for older isolated adults, part of a range of efforts to continue connections while buildings were closed through partnerships with community organisations and the third sector. Though seemingly limited in scale, I argue that it is in these small acts of care that we might find the renewed relevance of the museum, further positioning the museum as a ‘space of care’ in the community. The paper also presents early finding from a qualitative interview-based project exploring the impact of this work on staff - the costs and rewards of caring during a crisis, and how this experience is shaping museum work priorities.
Youth, Cities and Dreams of Recovery.

Chemi Rigzin
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Abstract

When we talk about the youngsters contemporarily in order for them to have a sustainably satisfied existence in this present time, they mostly opt-out of the working culture of 9 to 5 and there is the trend of the desire to get rich quickly through various measures, such as blogging, influencers, YouTubers and using other methods such as investment and utilising short cut methods to double their money in a short span of time. The sense of insecurity, the mindset of a low paying salaried job, not getting enough freedom while working, destroying one’s level of creativity, and the fear of being put in a cycle of continuous day labor and being harassed by seniors is also reasoning that is causing instability among the present youth. The current situation and the looming worry of not being able to make it in life is the root cause of what is causing the unstable condition, insecurity, low confidence, and the uncertainty that a person would not be as successful as the next person if s/he stays on the same track as the previous generation before them. In the eyes of the youths of South Asian youngsters; If I take myself as an example of the Global South, a refugee student in South Asia, residing in a host state, a person without a recognized nationality, a citizen without a country, whose future is uncertain in so many ways is the definition of being an immediate youngster in these ultra-modern times. They see the north majorly as the better choice of life to live, a life of comfort, security, financially stable while enjoying life and not worrying about the future as is what is being seen and felt by the youngsters of the Global South. The precarity can actually be seen and felt by the Global South even when it comes to education, colleges, universities, and also when it comes to employment opportunities or in making money and building a stable life for his/her family.
Belonging to the sea - Coastal imaginaries of a Cheese

Kasper Ostrowski
Culture and Communication, Aarhus University, Denmark, Denmark

Abstract

This presentation investigates how a Danish speciality cheese through meticulously orchestrated metrological work (Callon et al., 2002) emerges as a sea cheese. It shows how provenance of food is made tangible and how place and imaginaries are invoked to bound and fasten a product within specific geographic and socio-cultural settings. Through a Nordic coastal strategy, the producer (Thise Dairy) effectively mobilizes the North Sea and ‘terroirizes’ a North Sea cheese. The terroirizing strategy of the North Sea Cheese includes naming, imagery, imaginaries of the North Sea, production sites, an advanced ventilation system, saltwater, salty air, salt crystals and a crunchy texture. In this narrative I unwrap an emblematic cheese and investigate how a coastal strategy can develop a robust geographical claim.

This presentation will include a brief experimental tasting re-enacting the coastal imaginary.
Ho Chi Minh City in the Time of Climate Change: Derailing the Economic Locomotive

Phan Hoang Long
Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, Singapore

Abstract

This paper considers the interactions between authoritarian governance and neoliberal economic policies and how they have shaped the landscape of Ho Chi Minh City. Since the Doi Moi reforms over 3 decades ago, Vietnam has begun adopting a more liberal approach towards economic management. At the centre of these neoliberal reforms was Ho Chi Minh City, the metropolis most poised to lead Vietnam’s renewed economic drive. Due to this positioning, Ho Chi Minh City was bestowed the moniker of “the locomotive of the economy”. In this paper, we contend that the city’s recent dramatic transformation has been motivated by two agendas. Firstly, an anxious desire to demonstrate Vietnam’s progress by providing the city and the nation with a venue for imagining progress. Secondly, to prove the Party’s efficacy as an economic planner while mediating its uneasy legacy with the Southern metropole. Yet, as the impact of climate change accelerates globally and locally, the authoritarian government must soon tackle the consequences meaningfully or risk its locomotive crashing, resulting in substantial human and economic cost. Due to climate change’s tremendous impact, the instances of civil disobedience in the Communist state could provide a glimpse into the potential opposition the regime will have to confront once climate change’s impact further crystallizes. Thus, the paper will aim to document the configuration of the authoritarian government in Ho Chi Minh City, as well as to depict its opposition and contemplate on the authoritarian’s possible response to its greatest challenge yet.
Hybrid knowledges and cross-scale linkages to strengthen small-scale farming resilience in the metropolitan countryside of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Felipe da Silva Machado
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Abstract

Studies of local and regional economies are not so much concerned with determining boundaries, but rather with how to identify and trace the various connections and articulations which operate within and beyond it (Goodwin, 2013). This research supports an integrated perspective by drawing on relational analysis to focus on the detailed mechanics by which the metropolitan countryside is ‘re-made’ through engagement with globalisation processes, examining the mediating effect of regional context and opportunities for local development. Today one question is how to adapt and apply knowledges and practices to local characteristics and demands. The result is hybrid knowledges that, to be fully understood needs to be analysed at different scales while recognising the importance of local processes.

Through a multidimensional approach, the study analyses agriculture and farming knowledges at the rural-urban interface, examining interactions between urban expansion and the historical agrarian context. Bringing examples from Rio de Janeiro Metropolis, the second-largest metropolitan area in Brazil, the complexity of farming systems presented contributes to better understanding of the metropolitan countryside. Recent urban growth in this region has been more a function of converting land into commercial, industrial, and residential areas associated with manufacturing activities and logistics development and not just real estate speculation like in the past. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that small-scale farmers have built resilience by adopting flexible strategies that utilised diverse types of knowledge, social organisation, rural innovation, and cross-scale linkages to become proactive in the face of rural change. In addition to offering new insights into how farming communities negotiate their place and knowledges in the metropolitan countryside, the research encourages to think beyond representations of rural spaces as passive in the face of urbanisation and globalisation by seeing more clearly the continuing importance of local agency in shaping resilient rural futures.
**Future-proofing the Illiberal City? Smart Securitisation and Populist Statecraft in Miskolc, Hungary**

Miklos Durr
Durham University, UK

**Abstract**

This study examines authoritarian social ordering policies in Miskolc, Hungary, and discusses their future implications for urban democracy. These policies emerged over the last decade as convenient populist shortcuts to combatting the city’s longstanding reputation as a post-industrial crime hotspot. Amidst national-scale trends of recentralisation, notions of a ‘strong state’ ousting Western capital after the 2008 financial crisis, the hollowing out of local governments, and the undermining of checks and balances, democratic accountability and civil society, the city’s fate has been wrapped up in a right-wing populist regime otherwise known as an ‘illiberal democracy’. The hard-line and socially discriminatory state-led securitisation agenda in Miskolc comprised i) forcible slum clearances chiefly targeting the segregated and stigmatised Roma population, and ii) the bolstering of the municipal police including a new smart CCTV system. I first argue that while symptomatically a recourse to urban revanchism in punitively displacing the ‘surplus population’ inherent to neoliberal market economies, the relative absence of private stakeholders in Miskolc puts profiteering behind populist electoral motivations. Second, as smart surveillance simultaneously became prioritised in Miskolc’s Smart City programme eclipsing all other digital initiatives, visions of the city’s smart future have been imbued with populist security discourses consolidating patterns of post-evictions exclusion. Third, this new exclusionary spatial order creates a securitisation vortex, whereby maintaining the illusion of a safe city – and so the leadership’s political popularity – hinges on the continued financing of the municipal police, foreclosing alternative emancipatory trajectories and cementing the will of the illiberal regime into the future.
The politics of urban industrial integration in African Authoritarian states: Integrating the Ethiopian Urban Industrial Nexus in the Disintegrating Party-State

Selamawit W. Robi
University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

A growing number of developmental Authoritarian African states – Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya - are attempting to steer structural transformation to address the political threat of the urban demographic explosion through large-scale state-driven industrialization in cities (Fourie, 2011:2). However, the interactive sub-processes of this transformation - urbanization and industrialization-are being steered through highly fragmented state action generating infrastructural, social and economic challenges in a range of African countries (UNECA, 2017; 2018). This paper examines how authoritarian politics drives this policy fragmentation by looking at how specific strategies for authoritarian survival have shaped urban policy, planning and development and its integration into industrial and economic development strategies. In doing so, it brings in the urban dimension into the analysis of authoritarian politics of development through the application of the lens of policy integration theory. Using the case of Ethiopia's ambitious state led industrialization in secondary cities; the paper unpacks the political drivers of the major challenges that are emerging in the urban-industrial nexus -i.e. problems of functional integration, fragmented sectoral spatial development and infrastructural voids. To that end, it discusses how EPRDF’s “divisive architecture of hegemonic governance” (Mehretu; - i.e., the narrow power sharing mechanism that is the ethno-federal party state; the agrarian distributional regime that served as the central distributional strategy; and the use of various targeted ‘urban development’ packages (Gebremariam, 2020:20 ), repressive laws (Adem, 2012 4) and forms of coercion and violence - created and maintained the rift between urban and industrial policy making, spatial planning and development.
Chi’xi geographies: a framework for unpacking the crisis of postcolonial territory in Amazonia

Tami Okamoto
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Abstract

While Angophone human geography has seen an increasing interest in querying and expanding spatial understandings of territory, it has largely remained epistemologically confined to the political-economic analyses and class-based experiences of the modern, Eurocentric state (Del Biaggio 2015; Halvorsen 2018). In the understanding that postcolonial territory did not emerge and cannot be solely understood from social and political processes taking place in the West, my research in Amazonia re-centres indigenous spatial epistemologies, praxis, and embodiments to approach territory from within and in constant relationality. In re-centring Wampis territory, I spatialise the concept of chi’xi, a motley mixed colour in the Aymara language that alludes to the “parallel coexistence of difference” and a way of “being and inhabiting different worlds at the same time” (Rivera Cusicanqui 2012, 2018; Zavaleta Mercado 1986; Arguedas 1968). I propose thinking about territory through chi’xi/geographies, where difference and modern-ancestral spatial knowledges are not dichotomically opposed nor entirely hybrid but co-exist alongside each other without necessarily mixing. Based on long-standing collaborations and more than six months of fieldwork in Wampis communities in the northern Peruvian Amazon, I look at how the Wampis autonomous government’s contemporary legal cartographic strategies incorporate modern technologies of order alongside pre-1950s Wampis spatial arrangements -particularly in the use of ancestral paths as landmarks that organise space prior to the creation of modern communities. I argue that understanding how Wampis imagine, practice, and embody chi’xi/geographies allows us to unpack the iterative crisis of postcolonial territory in Amazonia and, at the same time, to complicate broader indigeneity and territory discourses that circulate globally.
Children’s negotiation of their everyday spaces during the pandemic in urban Bangladesh

Matluba Khan, Tom Smith
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

Children’s educational experiences have been significantly affected during the COVID-19 pandemic with hugely different opportunities available to them. The experiences varied across different socio-economic groups and school types, they also varied depending on gender, age group and the context- urban or rural. Education in Bangladesh has continued to be disrupted since school closures on the 18th of March 2020 and schools remained closed for over 1.5 years. With little or no access to open spaces urban children’s mental health and wellbeing have been affected. This paper investigates how children and families navigated their home environment and the surrounding spaces in urban areas of Bangladesh during the pandemic. In doing so we applied ethnographic study of 20 families in Dhaka that included in-depth interviews with children, parents and grand parents aided with photography and art-based methods. The study findings suggest huge inequalities in children’s access to education across different socio-economic groups. While children from comparatively well-off families and attending private schools continued learning online, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds struggled to get any education. Overall parents and children expressed concerns over children’s mental wellbeing and physical health, lack of interaction with peers and teachers. Some positives were reported e.g. increased use of surrounding open spaces, and positive changes in relationships with parents and extended families.
Mapping local geographies of food activism: rationalities, politics and horizons

Eleanor Jupp
University of Kent, UK

Abstract

This paper reports on current research which has traced varying forms of small-scale food provisioning in three contrasting UK localities. These include food banking and sharing, community pantries and kitchens and community growing projects. On the one hand, all initiatives can be understood as ‘meantime’ activism (Cloke and Williams 2017) taking place in the ‘shadows’ of economic and environmental crisis and responding to immediate and material needs with communities (Power and Williams 2020). However, placing the rationalities and ethics of these projects centre stage may produce a different understanding of their politics (Power and Small 2022). The paper will focus on the differentiated local geographies of food activism involved in the three areas, which shape the resources and dynamics of practices. These include differences across class, race, gender and location, as well as resources of activism repertoires and discourses that ranged from anarchist and radical resistance to those around kindness and love (see Jupp 2022). Even within the spaces of particular projects, different meanings of activist practices co-existed and might be in tension with each other. I conclude that these are conflicted but ultimately productive spaces of citizenship that have the potential to forge new everyday politics.
Four cabbages good, two cabbages better? Situating the activist approaches of a mutual-aid organisation within the materialities of food waste. A place-based study in collaboration with Honiton Food Save

Leo Webb
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Food waste is a growing (and pragmatically solvable) issue at national scales, though solutions to these problems typically require the localised efforts of decentralised mutual aid organisations through alternative food networks, or national government-backed campaigns that highlight and shift the responsibility of waste onto the consumer. Large bodies of academia semi-discretely focus on food waste hierarchies and domestic food waste; whilst those that concern altruism, mutual aid, food justice, food banking, or food redistribution tend to implicitly consider the former areas, by positioning waste as an undervalued commodity for example. Within the broad field of food geographies there is increasing interest in situating waste beyond production and consumption networks, which can realised through the roles mutual aid organisations play in disrupting food systems and waste hierarchies by redistributing unsold (mainly fresh) produce from supermarkets and restaurants. Drawing on cultural geographical approaches to materialism and utilising semi-structured interviews with volunteers at Honiton Food Save, this research aims to reveal the materialities, emotionalities, and challenges behind the redistribution of unsold food. The research identifies several key themes which are explored through qualitative coding including: perceptions of and feelings towards food waste, technology and accessibility, community and identity, and altruism and volunteerism, which work to produce novel sociocultural imaginations of (un)wasted food through its redistribution. Upon concluding, the research calls for longitudinal studies of and greater regional integration between research into similar mutual aid organisations combating food waste post-pandemic.
Reconnecting sociality and nature through urban agriculture: Reflexions and lessons from the history of urban governance

Pieter Ooghe, Frank Moulaert, Constanza Parra
KU Leuven, Netherlands

Abstract

In this paper we aim to understand how urban gardening has acted and continues to act as a countermovement to commodification of both nature and sociality in Western European cities. We build on Polanyi’s conceptualization of ‘embeddedness’ and expand his analysis, by extending his view on the commodification movement to the broader alienation of social, human-nature and political relations. To better understand the changing character of these relations, we return to Kropotkin’s theorisation of Mutual Aid and Bookchin’s analysis of the city-community and its relations to nature. Against the backdrop of various social crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens are turning to urban gardening projects. Neighbourhood led socially innovative food provisioning networks aim to both tackle pressing problems such as food poverty and environmental unsustainability as well as aspire to fundamental socio-political transformation in the governance of their city. The gardens have become a hub of socio-ecological practices as a clear articulation of community solidarity. We analyse these contemporary practices in urban agriculture to understand the role of alternative urban agriculture in contesting (and at times reinforcing) the contemporary disembedding-commodification movement. We aim to interrogate the opportunities and fundamental obstructions placed by market and polities in the organisation of the initiatives, and question how these projects can contribute to a more democratic governance of the city. We first draw a long durée perspective on transformation, embeddedness and the broader relation between economy-society-environment-polity. In the second section, we analyse the historical double movement and its relation to urban agriculture practices. In section three, we discuss the contemporary city, the conditions for transformative change and the role of the political. Finally, in the last section, we summarise our findings in the research and their implications.
Reclaiming the mutualism of mutual aid: Learning the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic to reconceptualise the radicality of mutual aid

Oli Mould\textsuperscript{1}, Adam Badger\textsuperscript{1}, Jennifer Cole\textsuperscript{1}, Phil Brown\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}Royal Holloway, University of London, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Huddersfield University, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly ruptured our global society. We have seen health care systems, governments and commerce buckle under the strain of disease, lockdowns and unrest, but the rupture has also created space for radical (and anarchist) politics of mutual aid, as societal organising principles, to move into a more prominent position (and offers potential for this shift to remain after the crisis has subsided). However, in the short time since mutual aid has been thrust into the limelight we have seen a multiplicity and spectrum of geographies, applications and approaches. Indeed, we have also seen its appropriation by government(s) that takes advantage of mutual aid’s rallying cry of “solidarity not charity”; absolving the state’s responsibilities to sufficiently fund social welfare when good neighbours will do it for free. In this paper we map out how mutual aid has been enacted during the COVID-19 pandemic by charity, contributory and radical groups. We bring this together with a specific understanding of vulnerability as a site of possibility rather than passivity to forward a reconceptualisation of mutual aid that is based far more on solidarity, than charity.
Marine materialities and toxic inheritances

Jessica Lehman
Durham University, UK

Abstract

This paper lays out a conceptual argument for analysing toxic inheritances as they circulate in and through marine matter. For much of human history, the ocean was considered by hegemonic world powers to be a vast sewer, a place where waste would disappear and humanity could be washed clean. But as the role of the ocean has shifted in Western scientific and cultural ontologies from the periphery of life to its centre, so too have governance, knowledge practices, and popular imaginaries of marine toxic dumping changed. Indeed, decisions to refrain from dumping or storing waste in the sea reveal as much about the valuing of different spaces and bodies as decisions to use the ocean in this way. Climate change adds new dimensions, as the ocean stores, absorbs, and circulates carbon as a sort of industrial waste product, but also threatens its release on timescales and in material forms that both stretch imagination and hearken back to debates over nuclearism. By drawing on cases such as nuclear waste and carbon, this paper shows how oceanic ontologies are central to contemporary environmental politics of waste - and vice versa. Moreover, attending to marine materialities and the ontologies of waste attunes us to the politics and ethics of inheritance in the Anthropocene, locating relationality in a past that is always present and in a future that is neither pre-determined nor freely chosen.
Miracle Myths and Policy Transfer: The Role of Mayors and Charismatic Leadership

Gulnar Hasnain
Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

In this snapshot presentation I will introduce some of the main arguments of my PhD research to date. My research examines the role that Mayoral leadership and the related governance mechanisms directly connected to Mayors, play in the adoption of urban gang-violence reduction strategies in three case study cities of Medellín, Chicago and London. These three cities are important examples that bring together the many contending forces of the contemporary city—migration, heterogeneity, informality, public administration, international economic integration and illicit activity. Furthermore, in each of these cities there is a strong presence of male gang violence and a fractured relationship between the police and marginalised communities. All three cities have fluctuated between a zero tolerance and a public health approach to tackle urban violence. I argue that rhetoric and “miracle myths” are often tools for policy transfer but without understanding the role of the governance structures and influence of stakeholder groups in the adoption of urban violence reduction policies and the form they take, one cannot assess the true impact of these policies.
Women in small-scale fisheries: navigating the digital transformation

Molly Atkins
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

The small-scale fisheries sector is experiencing an acceleration in the use of digital technologies, creating new relations between money, people, time, and space. Increasing attention has been drawn to the gender impacts arising from adoption of digital technologies by women fish workers in the Global South, who face multiple and complex gender-based challenges in work and society. Initial evidence suggests women’s engagement with digital technologies has created new opportunities economic enhancement, facilitated social networks and collective organisation, contributed to resilience amid the impacts of COVID-19, and challenges some of the spatial, temporal, physical and structural boundaries that constrain women’s mobility. Through a feminist approach to digital geographies, this study further investigates how women fish workers are navigating the digital transformation in small-scale fisheries, using a case study approach in Lake Victoria, Uganda. In this session I aim to present some initial findings from this ongoing study.
Colonial Translations within and against Border Regime

Isabel Meier\textsuperscript{1}, Aila Spathopoulou\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}Northumbria University, UK. \textsuperscript{2}University of Durham, UK

Abstract

In this presentation we explore translations within and against imperial and neo-colonial border regimes. Inspired by the important work of scholars such as Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez (2006) and Naoki Sakai (2010), we approach translation not just as a linguistic function but a cultural and political tool and explore it a de/bordering context. Border regimes rely on different forms of colonial translation work in order to effectively ‘manage’ and control the so called ‘migrant flows’, illustrating the historical continuities of translation in colonial contexts. Translations, as an instrument of power, are not only mobilised by states but also migrants, who as translators challenge the figure of the passive migrant and the assumption of being a recipient of translation. In our fieldwork, we encountered migrants resisting to perform these kinds of border work by refusing to translate the ‘order of things’, resulting in what state and humanitarian actors referred to as ‘incomplete translation’. This incompleteness can be thought of as a remaking of the political, as a political labour of debordering.
Intersectional Methodologies: Researching Women’s Perceived Safety

Anna Yates
University of Newcastle, UK

Abstract

This presentation will discuss the methods used to investigate the social geographies of women’s safety, specifically the relationships between fear, urban design, and residential segregation in Stockholm, Sweden. The intersecting causes of female fear of crime have been identified as a significant gap and this remains the case despite the abundance of research on safety and perceived safety (Pain, 2001). Informed by an intersectional framework, this research employed a novel methodological approach, involving a digital walking interview, relief maps and focus groups. These methods were uniquely adapted in line with the overarching intersectional framework in order to fully gauge the intersectional and spatial nature of women’s perceived (un)safety. This presentation will thus illustrate how these methods have been adapted to ensure that the intersectional nature of the method itself is recognised (Phipps, 2010), responding to broader debates on the potential for intersectional methods.
**Feminist-informed application of GIS story mapping: women’s lived experiences of green space in Cape Town, South Africa.**

Elizabeth Llewellyn  
University of Cape Town, South Africa

**Abstract**

Green space (GS) is widely considered to be essential for the sustainability and liveability of our cities (Kruize, 2019; WHO, 2016). However most urban GS research has focused on specific areas/categories of GS in isolation which may overlook combinations of multiple interactions which form our relationship with our environment (Bijker and Sijtsma, 2017). Furthermore, research indicates that women move differently around urban environments as they carry out disproportionately more care activities than men (OECD, 2019), make more personal safety-based travel decisions (YouGov, 2016, p.1; Wijntuin & Koster, 2019) and because they are more likely to work part-time/non-standard hours (ILO, 2018). Understanding urban women’s lived experiences of GS is essential to equitable realisation of green space benefits. This paper will explore the potential to combine GIS mapping and photovoice methods in developing a more lived understanding of women’s experiences of GS through their interactions with GS as they navigate Cape Town, South Africa.
Retelling the city: Following the stories of women who have made the city of Torshavn their home.

Sissal Tókadóttir Dahl
Groningen University, Netherlands

Abstract

The official cultural, traditional and spatial histories of the Faroe Islands are predominantly the stories of men. These unequal gender relations continue to be visible within the islands’ contemporary political, economic and social spheres. This forthcoming participatory action research seeks to challenge these dominant narratives and bring forth the invisible realities unfolding within the built environment. The aim is to facilitate ownership and empowerment through storytelling for both the storyteller and listener, and reimagine inclusive heritage. Over an approximately 8 month period commencing summer 2022, a series of life-story and walking interviews will be conducted with ten women aged 60+, including additional focus groups. In addition to a master thesis and academic paper, the research will culminate in an interactive map and audioguide that takes you on a journey through Tórshavn, led by the stories and recollections of the women who spent the majority of their lives making the city their home.
Pedestrian signalization as a barrier to secure and safe pedestrian crossings in Paris.

Kandice Kreamer Fults
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

Abstract

I propose to discuss an upcoming, personal research project on pedestrian security in Paris as part of the snapshot presentation session. My current and previous doctoral research interests lie in active travel and independent mobility for children. Independent mobility for children, when a child travels without an adult, has been shown to provide societal, mental, and physical benefits to children. Simultaneously, childhood independent travel is often a benefit to the parents and, due to the typical division of household care and other person care, this benefit is more often realized by a female parent. When discussing children’s active travel and independent travel, pedestrian safety is one of the most often cited concerns limiting children’s agency. With the desire to create a safer, street-crossing environment, this experiment aims to open a data-supported discussion to an idea we would term the “distracted intersection”, a place where the tools for safe pedestrian crossings have been weaponized against those pedestrians in Paris. There has been a long history of blaming the pedestrian for road incidents involving automobiles and pedestrians; in more recent times, the notion of a “distracted pedestrian” has been both the victim and the blame for such incidents. This experiment will observe and analyze video data on a sampling of pedestrian street crossings in Paris. We intend to capture the frequent usage of changing pedestrian lights as a justification for aggressive and violent behavior from drivers against pedestrians in an intersection. Through the combination of in-person observations and video reference, we hope to open an informed discussion on the design and usage of pedestrian crossing signals. We would like to frame this discussion within the context of feminist urban literature and pedestrian-vehicular micro-aggressions as one of the many daily micro-aggressions women face in the urban environment.
Conservation Goes Remote: Privacy, Trust and Remote Sensing Data in Conservation Landscapes

Rose Pritchard\textsuperscript{1}, Charis Enns\textsuperscript{1}, Tim Foster\textsuperscript{1}, Laura A. Sauls\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}University of Manchester, UK. \textsuperscript{2}University of Sheffield, UK

Abstract

Remote sensing data from satellites and drones are integral to conservation decision-making but are also changing the relationships between those living in, managing, and researching conserved lands. Here we investigate the extent to which conservation researchers and land managers are engaging with the privacy risks of remote sensing data, and how increased use of remote sensing data is altering the relationships of trust so essential to effective and equitable land management. Through a systematic review of conservation literature, we demonstrate that (despite important steps forward in recent years) the privacy and trust implications of remotely-sensed data still receive very little attention among conservation researchers. Our preliminary findings from a case study of the Peak District National Park illuminate the ways conservation land managers are recognising and seeking to mitigate privacy risks, but also illustrate how remote sensing data are altering power relationships and property rights in this institutionally complex conservation landscape. Our results reinforce recent calls for greater critical social science research effort on the politics, geographies, and social implications of conservation remote sensing.
Spatial strategies for abortion access in anticipation of the ‘post-Roe apocalypse’

Olivia Engle
Birkbeck, University of London, UK

Abstract

If Roe v. Wade (1973) is overturned by the US Supreme Court, 26 states are certain or likely to ban abortion—leaving 24 states with legal abortion. Yet we know that the rights imbued by Roe have already been unavailable for many pregnant people in the US, particularly those that are young, poor, BIPOC, and living in rural areas. In the face of enduring and worsening threats to abortion rights, feminist activists and providers have developed spatial strategies to facilitate abortion access in areas where it is restricted. This paper offers insights from the presenter’s PhD research with a telemedicine abortion service that effectively provides abortion for pregnant people from areas where telemedicine abortion is not permitted. This paper highlights ongoing and future challenges to abortion access in the ‘post-Roe apocalypse’ (Abortion Access Front, 2022), and envisions how activists and providers might respond to the looming disaster.
An embodied approach to researching with homeless women

Harriet Earle-Brown
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Homeless women are underrepresented in the media, policy and academia. Whilst academics have sought to address this gap, producing insightful studies on the lives of homeless women, there remains a lack of work which considers other intersections beyond gender. My PhD research approaches homelessness through the concept of the body. This approach not only allows for a more nuanced and intimate reading of homelessness, but also opens up space to consider how race, sexuality, gender identity and disability shape the lives of homeless women. The experiences and needs of Lottie, a woman with Indian heritage, have been completely different to Jessica, a white, British woman. At the same time, by focusing on the body, conversations surrounding menstruation, body hair, clothing and cosmetics have been possible, with the women describing the role the body plays, or does not play, in identity work.
Menstrual (In)Justice: A Feminist Recovery of Menstruation and ‘Period Poverty’

Charlotte Rhodes
University of Newcastle, UK

Abstract

In this presentation, I explore menstrual wellbeing with a focus on the limitations of achieving it through gendered, socioeconomic, health, and geographical inequalities. Shifting the narrative away from ‘period poverty’ to menstrual (in)justice, I argue for a feminist (theoretical and political) approach to challenge popular understandings of individual financial constraints in achieving menstrual wellbeing. ‘Period poverty’ presents a narrow, individualistic problem not recognised as an urgent social justice issue.

Drawing on empirical PhD research with 38 working-class women in Newcastle, I introduce the concept of menstrual injustice to highlight the role of economic inequalities, but also the impact of domestic abuse, homelessness and local geographical health inequalities that limit women’s ability for menstrual wellbeing. Engaging with the lived experiences of participants through a feminist geographical lens, I illustrate the more complex socioeconomic, cultural, medical, corporeal, and geographical factors in experiences and navigation of menstrual (in)justice in women’s everyday lives.
Integrating labour and environmental goals in Just Transitions: the Southern European case.

Rocío Hiraldo
Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain

Abstract

The deepening of current global climate and environmental crises has accelerated the development of ecological transitions. In this context the term Just Transition (JT), which seeks the integration of labour issues in current ecological transitions, has become increasingly popular. The Portuguese government plans to use the European JT fund to support dismissed workers after the closure of two thermal power plants and an oil refinery. In 2021 the Spanish government started the implementation of a JT programme involving the closure of thermal power plants, the subsequent provision of economic alternatives in affected sites, the creation of infrastructural support for these alternatives and the restoration of degraded lands. In both countries labour organisations and environmental movements are being appealed by these changes, but their meanings of what is “just” and urgent in this context often differ and clash. As a result, the balanced integration of labour and environmental goals that the JT term originally pursued complicates. In light of these tensions, it becomes key to understand how the different voices gain or lose power to shape JTs.

This paper investigates the complexities around the integration of labour and environmental goals in the context of the closure of thermal power plants and oil refineries in Portugal and Spain. Through an analysis of the narratives of labour and environmental organisations emerging in these energy transitions the paper suggests that a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges around the integration of labour and environmental goals in ecological and just transitions can be developed by paying more attention to: labour and environmental organisations’ conceptions of labour, nature and the labour-nature connection; the interactions between their narratives; the connection between ecological transitions and the material and cultural dimensions of labour in polluting industries; and the historical political connections and tensions between labour and environmental movements.
Entrepreneurial Governance through Re-politicized Policy Networks: “Mega” Urban Regeneration in Istanbul

Ebru Kurt Özman, Tuna Taşan-Kok
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Abstract

This research investigates the relationship of entrepreneurial governance, state entrepreneurialism and the re-politicization of policy networks in spatial governance through “mega” urban projects as neoliberal spatial planning interventions. The main purpose of the research is to operationalize the argument that new channels of inclusion in spatial planning can emerge through re-politicized policy networks, even in authoritarian governance contexts. The research in Istanbul shows that the entrepreneurial governance context enables those citizens who can organise themselves to have an impact on the process of policymaking by strengthening their positions in previous or existing social networks. These reorganised policy networks provide a basis for new forms of inclusion in the spatial governance system (as well as new forms of exclusion), regardless of the limitations of the top-down governance of urban planning. Within this context, and while urban protests, social movements, and other forms of counter responses are pushed down by several political mechanisms of the top-down state authority, citizen-initiated networks still have some impact on spatial organisation due to the entrepreneurial context of urban governance. Although entrepreneurial governance creates new exclusion processes and self-responsibilization for urban citizens, it also enables the organisation of policy networks to perform the wishes of citizens in this context. Even though their impact may seem limited, the new planning instruments are created in these policy network formations which help the re-politicization of urban governance.
The Political Economy of “Data for Development” and "Digital Identification for Development” Global Policy Initiatives in the Global South

Nai Kalema
UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, UK

Abstract

This research explores the relationship between global policy initiatives and the digital enclosure of public governance infrastructures, specifically national biometric governance regimes. This research posits that “Data for Development” global initiatives along with imbalances around global digital trade are facilitating the emergence of digital colonialism. The “Data for Development” (D4D) and “Digital Identification for Development” (DI4D) initiatives being driven through global institutions are an expression of the coloniality of data—power asymmetries stemming from data colonialism. Utilising this framing, this research examines the global political economy of D4D and Identification for DID4D initiatives to investigate how they are shaping Uganda and Kenya’s digital ecosystems and their integration into global digital economy and data value chains.

Performing a scoping literature review, this research examines whether D4D and ID4D initiatives promote a means for public and private actors to obtain more intimate, invasive, and continuous forms of personal data extraction and enact Instrumentarian power—read facilitating data colonialism. As some of the most intimate, invasive, and continuous forms of data extractivism occur in the public sector context in the Global South, this research examines how public sector data colonialism is being institutionally embedded into countries through D4D and ID4D initiatives through biometric identification systems.

This research examines global policies, specifically looking at laws, agreements, guidelines, and strategy documents tied to such projects. For the grey literature, the study looks at documents from global policy actors and institutions, including the WHO, World Bank, WFP, WTO, UNHCR, and ID4 Africa, academic institutions, and civil society actors, including global and local NGO and advocacy organisations. Finally, this research triangulates that data through an in-depth political-economic analysis of D4D and ID4D initiatives.
PROLOGUE / Mapping 180 days of leave: If I’m not ‘there’, where will I be?

Hazel Salminen
the Finnish Society for Futures Studies, Finland

Abstract

Having felt overworked and unsure of my direction for a long time, I mustered up the courage to take a leave from work. Study leave, sabbatical, whatever – the form was almost unimportant, as long as I would get to do “something else”. Something less. Somewhere else.

I wanted to regain space and time to think and just be. I also hoped for the return of everyday serendipities: randomly stumbling on projects, connections, and suggestions for new directions. This had disappeared as to-do lists filled all the spaces in my calendar and my mind. My life was all charted territory.

The preparations took months, but here I am. On leave, for six months. I have no idea what to do now, struggling between wanting to plan and accepting the unplanned. I decide to wait. Something will happen.

Five days in, an email arrives in my inbox about a session on Leave and Leaving at a Geography conference – a field that I left behind years ago. The conference itself is on the last days of my leave. This feels like a serendipitous suggestion for a direction. I decide to document my 180 days of leave, discovering the path as I move through this uncharted territory. Where and who will I be when I’m not ‘there’, at work? Can something new arrive as I’ve dared to leave? We’ll see!
30% - ‘Re-percent-ing’ ocean governance

Paula Satizábal\textsuperscript{1,2}, Kimberley Peters\textsuperscript{1,2,3}
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Abstract

30%. That is the proportion of the world’s oceans that have been suggested – and indeed targeted – as marine protected areas by 2030, the end of the UN Decade for Ocean Science. This goal follows an earlier numerically based target of 10%, one that the UN failed to reach, claiming ‘only’ the zoning of 7% of the ocean by 2020, the end of the UN Decade for Biodiversity. The newest target to enter the scene of oceanic conservation and recovery is undeniably ambitious. But is it necessarily ‘good’ for ‘saving’ oceans facing increased pressures ranging from marine pollution, acidification, warming, and overfishing? Percentage targets underscore particular spatial logics of how oceanic recovery can be achieved, by whom, and for whom. This provocation considers a single number – 30% – and a mapped depiction of the 30x30 campaign, in order to stimulate a discussion on the past, present, and futures of ‘re-percent-ing’ ocean governance.
Taking the ‘long view’: How perspectives on health inequalities over time as well as across space may influence our understanding of ‘repair, revival and transformation beyond recovery’?

Sarah Curtis
Durham University, UK. University of Edinburgh, UK

Abstract

The Chair’s Theme for this conference raises the question: ‘what modes of thought, practice, collaboration and solidarity can we contribute to the work of repair, revival and transformation, beyond recovery?’ This presentation draws on ideas circulating in various debates and consultations recently carried out in the UK, in which the presenter has participated as a speaker as well as a discussant. These have emphasised the importance of taking a ‘long view’ on inequalities of health, based on an interpretation which focuses on processes developing and operating over time as well as across space. It connects to the growing discussion among health geographers concerning the ‘lifecourse’ perspective.

The aim of the presentation is to provoke discussion about the modes of practice, collaboration and solidarity which we may need to pursue in order to address health inequalities and ‘repair’ the unequal impacts of critical events that repeatedly exacerbate health inequality. It focusses especially on how a geographical interpretation of models of complexity of the ‘cyclical’ risks and crises we face might help us to develop ‘more robust modes of thought, practice and collaboration’.
Towards aeolian microbial landscapes: diversifying learning from Covid-times to support cleaning the air within more-than-human worlds.

Emma Roe¹, Charlotte Veal², Paul Hurley¹, Sandra Wilks¹
¹University of Southampton, UK. ²University of Newcastle, UK

Abstract

Perhaps one of the enduring legacies of the Sars-CoV-2 virus will be greater efforts to clean the air to tackle and reduce the airborne transmission of infection – to make the air we breathe safer - redoubling efforts already declared about tackling air pollution from chemical, physical and biological contaminants (Manisalidis et al., 2020). Inspired by the findings from our bus microbiome study - where microbiotic landscapes on the seats, railings and surfaces of the inside of a bus appear in part to be explained by air-currents formed through the opening of doors, windows, the movement of bus passengers – we start to carefully consider a more-than-human theorisation of aeolian microbial landscapes as an intervention in human-air studies. Aeolian is defined as ‘Of the wind, aeolian processes include erosion, transport, and deposition and work best with sparse or absent vegetation’ (Mayhew 2009: unpag). In the paper we reflect on literatures on microbial socio-materialities of (un)healthy air (Brown et al 2020), post-phenomenological studies of atmospheres (McCormack 2018) and landscapes (Wylie 2007) sensed and unsensed, known and experienced, as a context for beginning to conceptualise human-air relations. How is air and its dynamics as wind, breeze, gust, dispersion and plume, not passively experienced but rather ‘actively constructed, made sense of interpreted and re-interpreted, produced and re-produced, and can be narrated and otherwise communicated in social interaction’ (Allen-Collinson et al (2018:1) in relation to the prevention, protection and risks of infection and other airborne health risks? How do we learn from when and how we breath, cough, sniff, and sneeze (Brown et al 2021) that afford an embodied mode of understanding about diverse experiences of human-air relations, along with responses to? Taking a lead from the cultural geographies of weather and particularly Wright and Tofa (2021), we work to be responsible in engaging with aeolian microbial landscapes, acknowledging that microbial aeolian outcomes and processes are not passive, universal or belong to anyone. But instead, microbial aeolian landscapes need be talked about, understood and responded to, by engaging with diverse voices and unequal experiences.
Gender (in)equality in infrastructure provision and policy strategies for encouraging women to cycle

Beatriz Mella Lira$^{1,2}$, Jose Agustin Vallejo-Borda$^{3,2}$

$^1$Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. $^2$Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile. $^3$Universidad de Cartagena, Colombia

Abstract

The benefits of moving towards more comprehensive methodologies in evaluating the use and impacts of daily mobility are relevant for promoting active travel from a gender perspective. In the Latin American context, the evaluation of cycling infrastructure projects is mainly under a cost-benefit logic. However, the limitations of using cost-benefit analysis (CBA) in evaluating transport and mobility projects has been progressively evident, though recent studies in the Global North have already explored some of the obstacles in women's cycling choice: risk perception, lack of infrastructure, cultural identities and travel purposes, among others. Although these studies consider both socio-territorial and cultural aspects, they agree that cycling women perform no more than a third of recreational trips and no more than a quarter of commuting trips. In Latin American cities, women hardly reach 20% participation in cycling, compared to 75%-80% of their male counterparts, in a region where cycling does not exceed 5% of total daily trips on average.

This research aims to understand the factors that would reduce the gender gap between men and women in their daily cycling use, considering both conventional and more unconventional and emerging approaches. The methodological approach considers surveys conducted in September 2021 in Lima, with responses from a group of women cyclists and another of non-cycling women. This city has been the first of future consecutive data collections in other Latin American cities in the months following the development of this article.

This research is consistent with studies suggesting that the construction of infrastructure and the prioritisation of the cycling route are significant for women. However, the results also show that road and personal safety improvements are even more relevant to encourage more active travel. Campaigns of education and respect at driving and riding the bicycle, reduction of speed, and information about the health-related benefits of using the bicycle are significant for both cycling and non-cycling women. Considerations of subjective well-being, health-related policies, labour inclusion, and other concerns far beyond the construction of cycling infrastructure have been proven relevant yet so far have been generally invisible for public policy.
Abstract

This paper explores how some young people in Aotearoa and the Pacific are navigating uncertain futures in times of rapid environmental change. Their responses to social and environmental justice issues are integral to developing solutions to address climate crises, biodiversity loss and growing inequality. However, their perspectives and experiences are rarely integrated into national or regional policies in meaningful ways. Using a feminist political ecology lens, we focus on the intimate connections between youth as geo-political actors and the intergenerational implications of neoliberal decarbonisation agendas. Drawing from semi-structured interviews and a participatory analysis workshop, we explore how young people are contributing to decarbonisation, making sense of ‘just transitions’, and enabling more climate resilient Oceanscapes. Their important gender- and race-sensitive counter narratives and multi-generational awareness call greater attention to the ‘just(ice)’ necessary within future transitions for decarbonisation for diverse Island peoples.
Remote Control? Chinese Infrastructure in and above the Arctic

Mia Bennett
University of Washington, USA

Abstract

China has expanded its presence in the Arctic with polar research stations and icebreakers, which have invited scrutiny. Less critique has considered China’s more invisible infrastructure in the region, such as satellites. In 2019, China launched its first polar observing satellite, and it soon plans to launch synthetic aperture radar satellites to monitor Arctic shipping. Such “remote infrastructure” enables China to expand its presence across the volume of the Arctic despite lacking sovereign territory. By generating vast amounts of Earth observing data, Chinese satellites may strengthen the country’s position as a regional knowledge-producer. This may help the state participate in regional governance, especially as remote sensing and other forms of computationally-intensive science become preferred decision-making tools for governments and multilateral organizations. Yet China’s preference for spaceborne and marine observations may marginalize local, field-based, and Indigenous knowledge. This has consequences for epistemic norms within Arctic science and, more broadly, the geopolitics of knowledge production.
Syncopated spacetimes: African-American lyrical expression and geographical, anthropological and ethnological thought and practice

Emily Hayes
Oxford Brookes University, UK

Abstract

This paper brings into relief the clash and harmony of geographical imaginaries in lyrics and lyrical writing. It begins to consider the extent to which the post-colonial thought and practice of Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor who, although connected to the Négritude movement, Harlem Renaissance and Black Internationalism, might also be conceptualized as part of a greater wave of popular visual and verbal geographical discourse because of their repurposing of cosmic coordinates in their conceptualizations of a future universalism of enriched particulars. Contingently, numerous African-American thinkers, writers, poets and singers theorized terrestrial and cosmological space as the possibility of unlimited becoming. The paper demonstrates how geographical and cosmic frames were harnessed as techniques of self-affirmation and resistance to prevailing projections of socio-political and racial hierarchies. This exploration of these themes juxtaposes idioms and images sourced from nineteenth-century and twentieth-century popular African-American poetry, lyrical writing and jazz lyrics with geographical and anthropological ones. It discusses the thought and practice of several late nineteenth-century practitioners of geography, anthropology and ethnology who were variously associated with imperialism, and some with the scientization of racist and racialized theories and practices. All of these practitioners, the paper argues, demonstrated unresolved tensions in their verbal and visual construals of relations between understandings of spatio-temporalities, human and non-human, terrestrial and extra-terrestrial, and cosmological ontologies. In so doing, the syncopation of geography is accentuated.
Living Rooms: Writing and remembering in the domestic interior

Sam Johnson-Schlee
London South Bank University, UK

Abstract

This paper is a reflection on the experience of writing a book of creative non-fiction. I will share an extract of this book Living Rooms (forthcoming 2022 Peninsula Press), and reflect on how the practice of memoir writing opened up new modes of thinking about the domestic interior.

The book interweaves memoir, history, and theory; in this paper I will reflect on the capaciousness of poetic writing for incorporating a complex and fragmentary form of knowledge which reflects the experience of everyday life. In this sense the book takes inspiration from Walter Benjamin’s writings, such as One Way Street where a writerly kind of theorising allows thought to emerge from the ground of experience.

There is a politics to memoir, the attentive and careful work of remembering can transform the way that we approach the familiar. Writers like Vivian Gornick, and Marcel Proust, or the filmmaker Agnes Varda have, in different ways drawn attention to the radical work of remembering and forgetting in the domestic. I will suggest, with reference to these writers and my own work, that writerly methods are able to zero in on fissures and cracks in the familiar.

Crucially there is a geography to memoir, the act of remembering is a kind of writing place. Ultimately this paper will demonstrate, through a discussion of domestic space, that memoir and creative writing offer not only stylistic but methodological guidance to geographers in developing intimate and nuanced engagement with place.
Migrants' remittance pattern in a context of a mobile global crisis/crises: Interrogating the discourse of resilience

Anna Lindley\textsuperscript{1}, Kavita Datta\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}SOAS, UK. \textsuperscript{2}Queen Mary University of London, UK

Abstract

Migration shapes life in origin countries in diverse and complex ways. Over the last couple of decades, significant attention has been paid to migrants' remittances, increasingly framed in global development discourse as a ‘tool for development’. Moreover, the hypothesis developed that remittances are stable or even counter-cyclical, with migrants maintaining or increasing support at times of crisis in origin countries, insuring families and societies against downturn and disaster, when other external financial flows are often disrupted, and government support is limited or absent. Until recently, the focus was on rises in incoming remittances in response to crises affecting migrants’ countries of origin, predicted on stability in major migration destinations. But what happens when crisis hits destination countries? Given the global reach of the pandemic, one might well expect a more complex picture to emerge. But, after initial alarm bells at the start of the pandemic, World Bank analysis of recorded flows suggest that they have been a particularly ‘resilient’ financial flow - ostensibly a good news story in times of crisis. This paper takes a closer look at pandemic remittance practices, considering, (1) How is resilience being conceptualised and what evidence underpins these claims of resilience? (2) If remittances are resilient, what are the sources of this, given the disruption the pandemic has brought to migrants’ - as well as recipients' - everyday lives? (3) What are the politics of the discourse of remittance resilience? We draw on a combination of analysis of official statistical data, secondary literature, as well as primary research on how the pandemic has affected the lives, family situations and remittance practices of people living in the UK, via an online survey and qualitative research with people in the Brazilian, Indian and Somali communities (funded by UKRI/ESRC Covid Scheme). Highlighting issues with remittance macro-data, and centreing the pandemic experiences of migrant communities, the paper reveals the struggles of people mobilising remittances through often hard, exploitative and risky work, contextualising remittances within wider discussions of migrant well-being and rights.
Nature-based solutions for addressing coastal and riverside protection in South Tyneside: a policy gap analysis
Coleen Murty, Suzanne Hocknell, Andy Oroke, Maggie Roe
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

South Tyneside Council declared a climate change emergency in 2019 recognising that the borough will see more severe and frequent flooding, summer droughts and heatwaves, and more intense and frequent storms, with wide impacts on lives and landscapes. Here, we present a local, regional, and national policy gap analyses in the context of nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate mitigation in coastal areas. This includes a discussion of the barriers preventing piloting studies and implementation, and a review of the actions required by national government and relevant stakeholders to address ongoing flood and coastal issues. More research is required to underpin the full potential of NbS to provide the intended benefits as trade-offs can arise if climate mitigation policy encourages NbS with lower biodiversity value (monoculture forests etc). Biodiversity-based resilience and multi-functional landscapes are key. Restoring coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs, oyster beds and saltmarshes protects communities from coastal flooding, reduces damages caused by storm surges, and limits coastal erosion.
Leave and leaving spaces of safety - The sexually exploited hypermobile child

Rachel Searcey
University of Derby, UK

Abstract

This paper rethinks the discussion of hypermobility by intersecting it with identities. It is part of a broader project that explores the sexually exploited child during the transition to street-based sex work. Geographers frequently call on hypermobility to explore the embodied experience of movement between the different spaces, and what takes place during that time of mobility. One idea of leave and leaving that requires further consideration is the embodied movement between the subject, from ‘leaving’ places of safety and security to the fracturing of this when ‘leaving’ these spaces as a sexually exploited object. A main point of interest during this continual embodied shift is the child’s identity: in this sense, from a daughter to a sexually exploited child. It is during this period of embodied hypermobility where the child’s not only physical movement shifts but also her identity, from the fluidity of an ‘innocent’ adolescent/youth to a hypermobile child with a ‘spoilt’ identity, forced to move between the physical and embodied spaces of abuse and trauma. In this sense the idea of leave and leaving has two points of entry and exit. This paper explores how leave and leaving is experienced for the child who experiences child sexual exploitation across the points of safety and support, and the place of abuse and trauma, and how the child experiences and manages this hypermobile identity, as the daughter and sexually exploited object.
Can we enact Right to Food without food citizenship and food literacy? How do they intersect?

Lopa Saxena
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

The increasing scale of food poverty in the UK and an increasing awareness of the need to address the root causes rather than the symptoms of food poverty, has led to a resurgence of interest in the Right to Food. Calls for enacting the right to food have come from across all sectors: councillors, community groups, civil society organisations, faith leaders, farmers, food retailers, University students, Trade Unions, members of the public, academics and researchers. Different cities across the UK have started pledging themselves as ‘right to food cities’. As the different calls and campaigns show, there is increasing understanding of what the right to food entails, dispelling some of the ‘myths’ around it. Nonetheless, there is limited understanding of what it actually means in practice, and what mechanisms are required to enact this right.

My presentation will use right to food as an entry point into exploring citizenship, agency and meaningful participation in food system planning and governance. In particular, I will look at right to food’s intersection with discourses of food citizenship and food literacy, which focus on all the actors in the food system becoming knowledgeable, sharing ideas, and a shared vision, underpinned by a collective orientation. This will be a reflective piece, exploring the connections between these different but intertwined discourses and what it means for enhancing agency that is required to make transformational changes in the food system that ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all.
From recovery to resilience: sustainable food systems and their contribution to food security

Joshua Rees
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

The impact of the Covid-19 epidemic has exacerbated existing food insecurity concerns within the UK and brought this issue further into the limelight. Predominant approaches to address food insecurity have revolved around short-term, needs-based food aid (e.g., foodbanks) directed by charitable organisations. However, the increasing demand for such aid over longer periods, the reliance on external support, lack of culturally appropriate food, and exclusionary practices demonstrate that food-aid based approaches are not a sufficient nor sustainable solution. There is an urgent need to look beyond these responses towards more systematic, sustainable, and holistic interventions to develop resilient food systems.

A central theme throughout the literature relating to food security approaches at the community level (i.e., community food hubs, community supported agriculture, community gardens) is an emphasis on the importance of resilient local and alternative food systems to alleviate food insecurity, improve access, and to bridge the gap between consumers and producers. However, there is a possibility that these alternative approaches replicate the same purpose as emergency responses by providing needs-based food aid. Additionally, access to these approaches is not equal. They can unintentionally exclude vulnerable populations and reinforce existing inequities. This presentation will critically examine the practical approaches adopted by local food systems and alternative food networks to address food insecurity before and during the pandemic. It will highlight the strengths and limitations of current approaches, their ability to meet short-term needs, how they can be strengthened so that they are more accessible and outline future approaches and challenges.
Lockdown, Resilience and Emergency Statecraft in the Cape Town Food System

Florian Kroll
University of the Western Cape, South Africa

Abstract

Globally, government-imposed responses to the Covid-19 pandemic triggered shocks which cascaded unevenly through urban food systems. In the fragmented African metropolis of Cape Town, this disrupted precarious livelihoods, mobility and food provision. The brunt of the impact was absorbed by large impoverished populations, whose food insecurity deepened persistently. Employing a vital systems security lens, we analyse policy documents, interviews and group discussions to show how civil society and state networks mobilised in response to Covid-19 lockdown, deploying food governance innovations to mitigate and adapt to its impact. These built on responses to intersecting actants – industry concentration, infrastructure constraints, drought, listeria, and party politics. Policy networks deployed online collaboration technologies to unlock more inclusive spaces for food governance deliberation. As events raised food issues on the policy agenda, policy agents formulated proposals, and navigated these through the widening policy window. These shifts incorporate urban agriculture, emergency food relief, social support, infrastructure development and city-wide food sensitive planning. This feat of statecraft assembled governance networks and regulatory instruments to secure food systems, leverage alternative food networks for emergency relief, enhance preparedness for future disruptions and present opportunities for transition towards agroecological food systems. Novel networks and spaces of deliberation offer prospects of increased agency promoting food systems transformation. However, the configuration of emerging governance arrangements privileges powerful food system actors, permitting avoidance of food system inequities while devolving impacts to community networks. Continued agile statecraft can anticipate future crises to advance transformational agroecological agendas despite resilient vested interests and unequal power relations.

Rhys Partridge
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

This paper intends to analyse discourse surrounding key events in the emergence of both a politically legitimated far-right and an extraparliamentary, antiracist centered form of far-left protest in the French election cycles of 1983 and 1984. Proposing to take discourse as a form of spatial structure, the analysis will investigate how the articulated statements of various actors across the political spectrum functioned to create a space wherein several narratives relating to immigration, history, language, and nationalism interconnected and were present in broader French society. Within media discourse, 1983 is a watershed that saw the French far-right take on new significance in daily life with their first electoral successes at several municipal elections. Similarly, antiracism in France soared to new levels of importance. The March for Equality and Against Racism received popular media support, and saw thousands of supporters seek to demonstrate solidarity with the Maghrebian French population facing discrimination and persecution within the country. While the march was not dedicated specifically against the Front National, subsequent antifascist movements emerging over the course of the following year would retain antiracism as the core tenet of their opposition to the party and the main reason behind their disillusionment with the mainstream left.
Infrastructures of Antifa Militant Politics and the Question of the Political

Ali Jones
Coventry University, UK

Abstract

This paper investigates the discursive infrastructures of contemporary German Antifa activism in light of the 1977 Red Army Faction and political violence. The analysis relies on unpublished interviews with Michel Foucault in 1977, wherein he explains that hidden state violence can only be called out by activists “becoming the terror” themselves. The paper uses this intellectual foreground to understand the changing nature of German Militanz (as opposed to violence - Jones 2018) in the Autonomous Antifa. This concept of limited “moralised violence” will be juxtaposed with recent legal prosecution of an Antifa group in Leipzig, who allegedly used violence against Neo Nazis. The paper will query what makes these alleged actions violence rather than Militanz, in order to interrogate the nature of this Antifa discourse as a form of (perhaps lacking) political infrastructure, in contrast the discursive structures of Antifa violence after 1977, and it ultimately queries whether this use of alleged violence adheres to the standard of “the political” itself.
The George Floyd Rebellion and Plantation Transformation

Hannah Kass
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

Abstract

This paper uses a grounded theory approach to analyze accounts of the 2020 George Floyd Rebellion – found in online archives of insurrectionary anarchist and abolitionist zines, documentary films, and interviews. It demonstrates how the police, once a fixture of the American plantation, constitute a plantation logic forming a foundational plank of the Plantationocene – the geological epoch of planetary change defined by racial capitalism and colonialism. Policing is considered particularly as an extension of the American nation-state, built on the ordering of plantation labor and capital. Several themes and subsequent theories are pulled out of the accounts offered by rebels who participated in the uprisings: American plantation state (re)formation occurred through hard and soft counterinsurgency, and their operative congealing through the fundamental State (re)formation functions of militarization and civilianization. This plantation logic is theorized as a social war of whiteness, continually waged against Black life. Rebels describe how this plantation logic was challenged by joining together as accomplices in a multiracial civil war against an American nation-state predicated on Black death, challenging its manufactured “peace” with a coalition of true “peace among the people.” Plantation futures were forged during the uprisings through militant direct action borne from rage and mourning for those killed by police, and the creation of autonomous zones steeped in mutual aid, community care, joy, love, and partying – spaces that celebrate and sustain Black life, and oppose the American nation-state’s social war against it.
Refusing the gift of welfare: Syrian refugees’ encounters with the Danish state

Malene Jacobsen
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This paper traces the colonial logics embedded within Western states’ welfare and workfare programs. The imperial and capitalist underpinnings of Western welfare states have been quite well elaborated. Less research has focused on the colonial logics and strategies at work in their administration of welfare and so-called “integration” programs targeting newly arrived refugees. Drawing on ethnographic work with Syrian refugees living in Denmark, I examine Syrians’ encounters with the Danish welfare state and the five-year mandatory “integration” program. Through Syrian refugees’ accounts, I argue, that we can begin to re-narrate the nature and meaning of contemporary welfare states and the colonial and racialized policing logics that structure and sustain them. More specifically, Syrians’ accounts draw attention to the often overlooked roles that welfare regimes perform in maintaining colonial, racialized hierarchies of humanity as well as extractive and dispositive processes typically understood as economic aid and sustenance. Moreover, Syrians’ accounts of the Danish welfare state help to unpack the centrality in un- and underpaid forms of labor that refugee communities are required to perform, thereby enabling capital to materially benefit from stigmatized Others living in Denmark. Finally, Syrians’ refusals to abide by these regimes animate potential for refusals and living otherwise, even under conditions of domination.
Racial capitalism and food charity in genealogical perspective

Andrew Williams¹, Jon May²
¹Cardiff University, UK. ²Queen Mary University of London, UK

Abstract

The history of charitable food provision in Britain – and the British welfare apparatus more generally – is tightly interwoven with the history of colonialism and slavery. In this paper, we take a genealogical perspective to examine how historical and contemporary forms of food charity continue to be entangled in wider circuits of racial capitalism. Drawing on archival research, we offer three ‘cuts’ into this history. The first - charitable welfare and the slave economy - documents the key role played by the Transatlantic slave economy in the development of Victorian food charity. The second - racial capitalism and the post-war welfare state - focuses on the role of colonial extraction in the establishment of the British Welfare State, and highlights some of the informal systems of food provisioning developed during this time to mitigate racist discrimination in jobs, housing, education, health and the social services. The third – Food banks and corporatized charity – examines the ways in which contemporary food charities continue to rely upon ongoing processes of racialised dispossession.
When and How Long? Precarity and Uncertainty in Expectant Fathers’ Negotiation of Paternity Leave at Work

Alice Menzel
University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

Building upon broader conceptions of family-as-practice, feminist geographers have convincingly situated pregnancy/parenthood as implicitly spatial experiences, with the transition to parenthood being associated with an array of spaces/places and changes to spatial routines. Following the arrival of a child, parents typically take a portion of leave from work, the amount of which generally differs between mothers/fathers. The (inter)embodied nature of pregnancy and early infant care provides a certain (biologically determinist) ‘logic’ to the gendered allocation of leave, perpetuated by pervasive societal expectations over gendered parenting roles. In order to establish ‘good mothering’ practices – such as breastfeeding – and recover from labour/birth, it is generally expected that mothers will need, and take, more time away from work, compared to fathers. In the UK, for example, statutory maternity-leave includes 26-weeks ‘ordinary leave’, compared to just 2-weeks paternity-leave1. However, for first-time fathers especially, paternity-leave is an important and highly valued period to bond with their child and support their partner’s recovery. Drawing upon my doctoral research on expectant fathering, which entailed periodic, in-depth interviews with nine participants (most living in England), this paper examines fathers’ emotions and experiences of requesting and negotiating leave from work. It examines the fractiousness and uncertainty participants felt about their leave, contributing to understanding of the emotional geographies embroiled in fathers’ navigation of workplace spaces and commitments during pregnancy/early parenthood. Thus, it furthers geographic research on (expectant) fathering, as well as broader (feminist) debates around flexible working in supporting fathers’ more equitable contribution to the labour/demands of early parenthood.
CREATIVITY, HERITAGE AND AN URBAN STONE MEGALITH: GOUROCK'S KEMPOCK STONE

Tim Edensor
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Abstract

In the Scottish town of Gourock on the Clyde Estuary, standing amidst housing atop a cliff, is a veritable monolith popularly known as Granny Kempock. This six foot lump of schist, perhaps a standing stone of ancient vintage, has been a marker of place for centuries. Due to its resemblance to a hooded human figure, some local myths identify it as a malevolent witch that cast spells to sink the town's ships that has subsequently been turned to stone by benign forces. Alternatively, the stone has been the site of rituals around which newly weds and those about to set sail have circumambulated to seek good fortune. A host of vernacular creative practices have surrounded the stone, as well as local artworks that commemorate its presence. In addition, two novels have been written in which Granny Kempock is central to the narrative, and a six part Scottish TV children's series representative of 1970s occult themes also focuses upon the monolith. Despite its modest renown, the stone has received no official heritage listing. In this presentation, I explore whether it is precisely this lack of authoritative heritage adoption that has denied any 'expert' narrative fixing of the stone and has facilitated the creative engagements that have ensured that it remains a significant signifier of local identity.
Centering Global South immigrant voices in UK climate justice research - 5 minute roundtable provocation 1

Nafhesa Ali
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

Nafhesa will discuss the ‘Towards Inclusive Environmental Sustainability (TIES)’ Leverhulme-funded research project that examines how people who have migrated from Pakistan and Somalia to the UK experience and respond to the net zero/climate change agenda in Manchester. Nafhesa will draw on preliminary findings of the project that draw attention to spaces of racial, social, and economic injustice within climate change agendas and initiatives. Two key findings are that i) elite (mostly white) policy makers fail to acknowledge their own privilege and/or do not know how to tackle the lack of ‘diversity and inclusion’ within their sector and that ii) PoC who work within the environmental/climate policy sector find it difficult to challenge ideas within the sector due to the fear of being ‘othered’. Nafhesa will also look at how racialised (im)migrants from the Global South are interested in being part of the wider environment agendas and how they can be better included through (re)conceptualising climate change-related language and messaging.
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**Centering Global South immigrant voices in UK climate justice research - Roundtable chair/facilitator**

*Sherilyn MacGregor*
University of Manchester, UK

**Abstract**

The chair’s role will be to introduce the session and the speakers, facilitate dialogue and keep time. The chair will not offer any substantive commentary; she will ensure that the session format mirrors the title by decentering dominant voices.
Centering Global South immigrant voices in UK climate justice research - 5 minute roundtable provocation 2

Jaya Gajparia
South Bank University, London, UK

Abstract

Jaya will discuss her new sustainability project at South Bank University. Her research expertise is in gender equality, ethnicity, race, intersectionality, poverty alleviation, sustainability, systems thinking, social justice, inclusive education, postcolonial and third world feminism.
Centering Global South immigrant voices in UK climate justice research - 5 minute roundtable provocation 3

Zarina Ahmad
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

Zarina will draw upon her experience as an activist and practitioner to discuss the importance of ensuring mainstream environment and sustainable narratives are inclusive of cultural and ethnic perspectives, approaches and needs. Through changing processes social inequalities such as gender, race, poverty, inclusive education and intersectionality can be addressed examples of how this can be achieved will be highlighted from her projects such as the Climate Sisters Exhibitions and the Ethnic Minority Environment Network. Zarina will also discuss her research “An intersectional ecofeminist exploration of the food provisioning practices of Pakistan-heritage women in Manchester and Glasgow” exploring whether these practices are seen as being pro environmental and how they influenced by culture and identity.
Centering Global South immigrant voices in UK climate justice research - 5 minute roundtable provocation 4

Alessandra Pallange
University College London Institute of Education, UK. Muslims Declare, UK

Abstract

Alessandra will introduce Letters to Imams, an exhibition that she has developed in collaboration with Muslims Declare and the Zero Hour campaign. This ‘travelling exhibition’ of illustrated displays will tour faith spaces (mosques but also educational and public spaces) across the UK to highlight the impacts of climate change around the world and generate discussions about different perspectives on climate activism through a series of ‘deliberative’, or community, workshops. The exhibition is designed to connect Muslims in the UK with Muslim activists from different countries through a series of ‘letters to imams’ written primarily by children and young people. Alessandra will discuss how conversations about both the causes and impacts of the nature and climate crisis are unequally distributed, with the poorest communities having the lowest carbon footprint yet being disproportionately affected and least prepared to deal with its devastating impacts. The aim of the exhibition is to reflect on the importance of the imam, understood in the broadest sense as ‘one who leads’, and highlight the importance of holding people in positions of power to account when they fail to pave the way towards a just and sustainable transition.
Somali Foodways in Bristol and how these influence household sustainability

Joanna Bushell
University of the West of England, UK

Abstract

Joanna’s research responds to the call by Head et al. (2018) about the importance of understanding the environmental values, knowledge and behaviours (EVKB) of ‘global south’ immigrants living in the ‘global north’ for challenging ‘western’ assumptions and opening up possibilities for new environmental learnings. Contributing to emerging research on proenvironmental understandings from Somali households within the United Kingdom (MacGregor et al. 2019), Joanna’s PhD research is an ethnographic study of Somali households in Bristol, through a critical examination of Somali ‘foodway’ values and practices. For immigrants, foodways are particularly important for maintaining ties of kinship, social and cultural groups, together with forming new ones and are used by immigrants as markers of continuity and change. As such, foodways are a useful heuristic for understanding the complexities of immigration and change, and thus opens up possibilities for wider understandings of how GS immigrants engage with, understand, and challenge climate related policy in the UK.
Harmonious living: Sustainability, Ecology and the Eco-Islam movement in South Wales

Tanja Mancinelli
University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK

Abstract

Tanja will draw upon her PhD research project “Harmonious living: Sustainability, Ecology, and the Eco-Islam movement” which aims to provide an in-depth description of environmental/climate movements in Wales based on the Islamic faith to present a comprehensive analysis of the measures taken by the Welsh Muslim communities to tackle issues around sustainability, ecology, climate change, and environmental protection. Tanja will discuss to what extent these environmental practices - where existent - are influenced and informed by Islamic environmental ethics, and their deep connection and relevance to social justice.
Graffiti practices, artefacts and para-archiving

Alex Hale
Historic Environment Scotland, UK

Abstract

Authorised graffiti, such as murals are considered an appropriate subject for heritage organisations to engage with. Through survey and documentation, resource management, archival curation and categorisation systems, the organisations envelop material representations into their archives. But as we know, graffiti is much more than officially sanctioned murals. Graffiti encompasses bombing, hitting spots, writing tags, putting up throwies, and creating pieces. Within these are the tangible and intangible aspects of graffiti that our heritage systems struggle to engage with and yet we accept that they are heritage.

Graffiti writers’ practices are developed through working on their letterforms, drawing and painting at home and creating their own handstyles (Acker 2013). They create, review and recreate their tags in a way of ‘doing, undoing and over-doing’ (Rendell, 2011, 18). This practice of creating multiple prototypes, artefacts of their heritage, is an act of archiving which is rarely considered within heritage discourse. My paper aims to explore the spaces between graffiti artists and their artefacts and the broken models of archiving heritage. These spaces form where heritage organisations and graffiti writers intersect, which are rarely considered, but appear fruitful when explored collaboratively. The concept of para-archiving (Slager, 2011, 82) enables us to (re)consider graffiti writing, not as something to become heritage, but as a transdisciplinary practice that enables rarely glimpsed aspects of places, practices, performances and times to be surfaced. Para-archiving enables us to excavate surfaces, such as black books, proto-typing, fails, those who don’t ‘get up’ and retrace artist’s creative journeys, rather than deposit material into closed archives. This turn from archiving to para-archiving enables re-rendering our positions when we consider graffiti as heritage.

Reference:

Christian Acker 2013 Flip the Script Ginko Press.
Jane Rendell 2010 Site Writing. The architecture of art criticism I. B. Tauris.
Henck Slager 2010 The Pleasure of Research Hatje Cantz Verlag.
Against the Grain of the Lyric: unearthing geoliterary mat[t]er

William Jamieson
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Abstract

For poetry, the lyric is a capacious form through which the individual pieces together their consciousness through poetic form. For geography this presents some possibilities and hazards; it both extends, challenges, and yet reinforces the durability of the individual as the guarantor of aesthetic and political possibility, patrolling the horizon of intelligible utterances. But what of the inhuman lyric, or writing with the non-human? This paper proposes geoliterary methods as a way of unearthing the matter of geography by fashioning forms of earth-writing which express the interanimating materialities of the earth. It will do so by performing a piece of writing that takes the humble grain of sand as its standard unit of measurement, foregoing all other forms of punctuation. Based on fieldwork investigating how sand was mined in Cambodia to reclaim land in Singapore, the short story ‘mat[t]er’ performs the interanimation of landscape through the eruption of countless grains of sand. Originally a remote mangrove fishing village, Koh Sralao suddenly became a grisly frontier of extraction. Ships swarmed the rivers and estuaries, devastating livelihoods and local ecologies, all the while land began to gestate hundreds of miles away. ‘Mat[t]er’ recounts this movement of landscape from frontier to city-state through the granular materiality of sand itself. This contribution asks how we can write materiality in geography at the level of the text and bridge the gap between the phenomenological lure of landscape and critical accounts of resource extraction through thinking with the dynamism of geography’s matter.
Disjunctive Writing in the Urban Skinscape: Bodies, Borders, and the Physiology of Attention

Julian Brigstocke
Cardiff University, UK

Abstract

This talk introduces a creative geographical writing project around violence, bodies and borders in the favelas (informal communities) of Rio de Janeiro. How to write the favela? Rio’s favelas are both maligned and exoticized; cast as the site of authentic community and also as places of scarcity and violence; seen as a source of popular agency and also disparaged as zones of irredeemable violence wielded by drug lords and corrupt militia. Favelas are caught in a maze of ambivalent representations. This paper styles a ‘disjunctive’ form of creative geographical writing that embraces discontinuity and multiple narratives. The paper draws on fieldwork exploring women's embodied emotional responses towards the militarized bordering of the favela, drawing on interviews, observations, as well as experimental use of neurophysiological (galvanic skin response) data. Its aim is not to synthesize lived and nonconscious experiences into a coherent, singular argument, but to exploit fractures and discontinuities between different stories and forms of evidence. At stake is the question of how geographical writing accounts for wounds: being wounded, witnessing wounds, feeling wounds, writing wounds.
Abstract

The social scientific relevance of the shipping container, an invention without which economic globalization would be unimaginable, is by now well-studied by social scientists (Martin, 2016). The paper examines the social scientific relevance of another global object, also an important driver of global processes, although one which has been overlooked in social research - the ballast tank. The ballast tank, like the container, is implicated in globalisation in two ways the presentation examines - firstly through the globalisation of the world’s biota in the movement of so-called invasive species; secondly, through the governance this process generates. The presentation will examine in particular the IMO Ballast Water Convention of 2004. The paper examines how in the process of providing stability to ships, this object has profoundly disrupted coastal ecologies around the world (Streftaris et al., 2005).
Manufacturing Gender

Saumya Premchander
University of Bayreuth, Germany

Abstract

In my poster I would like to examine the kinds of gendered identities and relations that emerge from highly digitalized industrial production in the auto industry. Taking the case of Tesla, as both a technological innovator, and an automotive manufacturer, I propose to study first how narratives of digital progress and sustainability are essentially masculinist in their proto-modernist tinge. Second, drawing on field work conducted around the Gigafactory in Grünheide, Brandenburg, I suggest that in addition to looking at the effects of digitalized work on people of different gender identities, it is necessary to study the modes of production, processes and devices that guarantee the continuation of gendered, social and spatial inequalities; not simply guaranteeing their continuation, but also reformulating, and justifying them.
Fighting energy poverty or a new strategy for financing public housing? The case of solar panels initiatives for public housing in Israel

Dorit Garfunkel, Ronit Piso
Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Israel

Abstract

Energy poverty is a growing problem worldwide. Most affected are vulnerable households. To support energy resilience, and reduce the perils of global warming and climate change, recent policies and regulations in Israel as in elsewhere are increasingly incentivizing new public investments in these directions. A central global challenge, is the reduction of Co2 emissions in the build environment. In Israel, since public housing is entirely owned by the state, an allegedly win-win situation emerges, where solar panels could have been immediately installed in public housing to simultaneously reduce emissions and assists the poor. But despite the new regulation, initial state initiatives seem to be driven from financial considerations alone, aiming to commodify public housing roofs, rent them out to solar panels providers, not necessarily considering the potential social consequences. Based on semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and focus group with public-housing residents, we investigate the interest and power gaps between regulation and practice; and between stakeholders involved. We ask: Who benefits from the new regulation? and what values can be extracted for public housing residents? Initial findings show how financial logic generally defeats social and environmental considerations, hindering the installation of solar panels. Local governments play a pivotal role in mitigating the varying interests of state-level actors and public-housing residents. Through small-scale, often self-sufficient, local programs, new initiatives emerge to support the poor. But while the locality of these initiatives serves their success, it is also an obstacle for scaling-up and engaging state-actors in more profound initiatives, undermining broader regulatory aspirations.
Developing a Market: A Comparative Study of Disaster Risk Finance in Indonesia and México

Emma Colven1, Beki McElvain2
1University of Oklahoma, USA. 2University of California, Berkeley, USA

Abstract

This comparative study examines the implementation of disaster finance instruments in Indonesia and México by offering insights into the ways private finance capital is mobilized through sovereign ex ante instruments for disaster recovery. Building on emerging urban climate finance and critical urban geography scholarship, this study situates two high risk, high inequity cities—Jakarta and Mexico City—as sites for analyzing the motivations and impacts of the World Bank catastrophe bond program within the globalizing landscape of disaster finance. The México case represents a model for the transference of sovereign disaster governance to international reinsurance and capital markets, and the Indonesia case represents a site for expansion of the World Bank program where no previous sovereign coverage exists. Drawing on expert interviews and document analysis, we ask: (1) How do catastrophe bonds integrate with political economic structures in particular sites?; and (2) What are the impacts and implications of supplanting government funding to development and private finance? Through an in-depth, multiscalar analysis of the implementation and expansion of the catastrophe bond market, we elucidate the ways specific ‘finance gaps’ are identified and then addressed by development finance institutions (in this case, the World Bank/IBRD) who operate as intermediaries for attracting private capital to global Southern cities through the marketization of risk. We extend this analysis by offering a comparative study that identifies space for further human-centered research on what it means to be precarious and how we think about disaster recovery and the inherent violence of global capitalist structures.
Integrating remote regions. How remoteness affects migrants and local communities’ integration processes

Maria Luisa Caputo, Michele Bianchi, Simone Baglioni
University of Parma, Italy

Abstract

This paper will discuss integration processes between migrants and local communities occurring in remote regions.

Integration is approached as a two-way process of mutual accommodation between newcomers and receiving societies as well as in its multidimensional domains.

Remoteness is considered from a geographical and cultural point of view. We approach it as a relative dimension: it depends on scale and connectivity rather than physical distance as well as on the mobility potential of the individuals. And a cultural based one: the meaning of distance and accessibility are culturally specific; it contributes to shape regional identities and those identities participate in the definition of what remoteness, and a remote place and community are.

Therefore, building from the research carried out in the Western Isles, Scotland, for the MATILDE project, we will discuss how the geo-cultural dimension of remoteness impacts key domains of integration and in particular labour market and residential integration; social relations; access to education, health and services; access to the local language, culture and the local environment.

In this sense, we will be able to discuss how a geographical and cultural space participate in migrants and local communities’ integration process. The role of space in migrants’ integration processes that has been broadly analysed in the urban context – in term of residential integration, cultural appropriation of the urban space, etc. – nevertheless to our knowledge is have not been discussed yet in remote regions.
“Cissie Gool House - A City Occupied”: Zine-ing as a collective tool in the struggle for decent housing in Cape Town

Tommaso Cosentino, Suraya Scheba
University of Cape Town, South Africa

Abstract

This paper is based on a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project that ran between 2020 and 2022 with residents of Cissie Gool House, a large housing occupation located in an abandoned public hospital in the rapidly gentrifying neighbourhood of Woodstock, Cape Town. By facilitating workshops on storytelling, we tried to tackle questions about ownership of stories and the power dynamics involved in detrimental representations of marginalized communities crafted by state officials, mainstream media and even academic researchers. As a result, in this paper we reflect on the emancipatory potential of reclaiming storytelling as a tool for developing counternarratives against stigmatizing discourses aimed at criminalizing and further dispossessioning black and working-class people who are denies access to decent housing. We do so by presenting and discussing one of the central efforts of the project: collecting stories and photo portraits of CGH residents into a zine. A focus on zine production as a collective instrument to support the struggle for decent housing lays the ground to reflect on the often-problematic relationship between academic research and political movements and on how zine-ing could help us to rework this relationship around ideas of complicity and deep solidarity. Furthermore, we argue that zine-ing, as a participatory process, holds potential for decentring academic researchers and outputs in social science research. We therefore retrospectively reflect on the mostly generative challenges we encountered in aiming for greater centrality of participants in the collaborative processes of storying and zine-ing.
The people’s migrant newspaper Voy Caminando! Zineing and the enactment of solidarity in sheltering practices

Cesar E Merlín Escorza
Radboud University, Netherlands

Abstract

At a border where migrants’ lives and mobilities are constantly commodified and criminalized, zineing and zines, are part of a long list of strategies used by people entangled in sheltering practices to contest the narrative of migration regimes. The people’s migrant newspaper Voy Caminando!, is a zine-like publication produced at a Home-Shelter for Migrant People located near the southern border of Mexico. It is the outcome of a process through which migrant people on trajectory and voluntary workers of the shelter have encountered to build a communicative channel that helps the migrant populations introducing themselves to the local communities, by using their own narrative. It is by sharing their travel stories and problems concerning their migratory status, but also elements of their cultures and identities, that the people hosted by the shelter used the zine to claim visibility and recognition, calling for the construction of commonality between them and the local population. This paper presents the experiences within the zine’s making-of process, reflecting on the motivations and methodologies behind it, and the dynamics involved in its co-production. It focuses on analyzing the tensions between the enactment of solidarity by the shelter’s staff and the use of self-representation as a tool for social navigation. It also moves beyond the case study approach to problematize the use of collaborative methodologies in relation to (academic) knowledge production, stepping into an ongoing conversation that centers the critique in the power unevenness often reproduced within ethnographic research, as well as the possibilities to counter it.
Zine-making as Community Space(s): A Case of Queer Judaisms

Maya Vizel-Schwartz
University College Dublin, Republic of Ireland

Abstract

This study examines the transformative potential of the zine-making sites and how they can operate as spaces of community building. This research study challenges and resists hegemonic neoliberal academic structures by co-creating data in collaboration with the queer Jewish community in Dublin, Ireland. Through autoethnography, a participatory and co-creative zine workshop, and interviews with 5 queer, Jewish zinesters, the study seeks to reconceptualize the role of zines in relation to building community with those informed by identity and affinity. This study draws on queer and feminist geographies to queer our understandings of zines by regarding the zines created in the zine workshop as a form of Jewish cultural production. Through examining zine-making as ritual, this study acknowledges the sanctity of disruption in our daily lives. Participants will be invited to reimagine and co-construct what queer Judaisms look like through their zines. Zines as product and as process will be analysed in order to examine how this zine-making experience has enabled the reimaginings of diaspora, justice, and queer kindships as a form of Jewish community building.
Journeys with mindfulness: zineing stories of recovery

Chloe Asker
University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

Throughout my doctoral research I worked with non-representational theories and methodologies, employing critical-creative techniques in order to explore themes of recovery, health, care, and the therapeutic in experiences of mindfulness. Zines played a substantial part of my creative technique. Zines are ‘cheaply made printed forms of expression on any subject’ (Todd and Watson, 2006, 12) and are bolstered as the ‘ultimate expression of the do-it-yourself ethic’ (Brent and Biel, 2014, 15). I used zines because they are open and diverse in their format, structure, and content. Zines were integrated into my participant information and consent forms, and during a participatory research phase of the doctoral fieldwork, I worked together with a group of participants to co-produce of a mindfulness course and subsequent zine: ‘a little book of wisdom’. This zine compiled resources, quotes, and sources of inspiration which had aided the participants’ recovery and mental health journey.

As I grew increasingly frustrated with the bulky and dense format of a doctoral thesis, I sought to create a creative, impactful output from the research that would be short, widely accessible, enjoyable to read, interactive, and easy to disseminate. This paper will explore the conception, development, and co-production of the zine, ‘journeys with mindfulness’, with an illustrator. The zine is a product of ethnographic and creative participatory research undertaken on the therapeutic geographies of mindfulness, and showcases six stories from participants about their experiences of recovery and transformational uses of mindfulness in their everyday lives.
The Zine as Mediator in Building Community within the University

Farhana Ghaffar, Esther Priyadharshini, Kavita Ramakrishnan
University of East Anglia, UK

Abstract

We are a research collective of 10 staff and PhD students of colour committed to a decolonial approach, and are working together to understand what ‘Belonging’ can mean, or fail to mean, when we inhabit the spaces of UK Higher Education. In the final stages of the project, we are co-creating a zine as a means to express our distinctive journeys through higher education, as well as express the overlaps between us that creates a sense of belonging within and beyond the university.

In this presentation we will reflect on how arts-based making practices were central to the expression of experiences not easily communicated through more traditional methods. Using collaborative and creative methods, such as drawings, collaging, body-mapping and journaling, these group doing-making activities generated learning encounters, with materials – objects, walks, body maps and photos – that acted as ‘mediators’ to produce not just material for the zine but to create a new sense of community beyond the institutionalized spaces available within the university. The act of creating/assembling the zine goes together with learning to imagine, understand, think and feel as a collective. We also explore how the physical and political act of zineing has provided a safe space for us to collectively critique, resist and recover from the various institutional barriers and challenges of (mis)representation we routinely encounter within HE as historically marginalized bodies. This act of creation is on-going and unfinished; nevertheless, it allows us to critically reflect on the dynamics of how solidarities may be produced.
Making sense and broadening imaginaries through collage

Leah Edwards
Durham University, UK

Abstract

This paper picks up Lynne Butler-Kisber's extensive work on collage as a mode of inquiry in Education Studies (Butler Kisber, 2008) to demonstrate the value of collage-making to geographers who are interested in disrupting positivist visual registers and who recognise the potential of alternative modes of knowledge production for broadening imaginaries. Here I reflect on how collage making was used to explore how the figure of the environment features in the everyday lives of a group of new mothers from the North-East. I point to collage as an accessible, affordable and low-tech creative process which can be employed in range of ways to both attend to and broaden climate change imaginaries.

Collage as the process of selecting and assembling disparate fragments of material into a composition is a technique which is employed in a range of creative outputs to disrupt and democratise modes of knowledge production and participate in the generation of new ways of knowing. These including zines (Bagelman & Bagelman 2016), memes (Bosworth, 2021) and deep mapping (Hawkins, 2015). These modes of engagement often involve layering elements ‘gleaned’ (Pratt, 2004) from a variety of sources, relying on juxtaposition and metonym to make political and epistemological claims. I highlight the use of collage in these examples to suggest the variety of ways in which geographers might move beyond collage as metaphor (Tolia-Kelly, 2013), rather enrolling collage-making as process of sense making and praxis for broadening imaginaries.
The Granular Frontiers of Global Trade

William Jamieson
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Abstract

As the second-busiest container port in the world, the city-state of Singapore has dedicated considerable infrastructural investment to retaining its logistical and maritime dominance. All current ports on the island will become centralized into the Tuas Megaport, which is currently being ‘reclaimed’ from the sea, and is due to be completed between 2025 and 2027, designed to accommodate the next generation of ultra-large container ships. However, as with the rest of its reclamation projects, the Tuas Megaport has relied on immense amounts of sand surreptitiously sourced from several Southeast Asian countries to be reclaimed. Singapore’s longstanding reliance on constructing territory with imported sand has had disastrous effects on ecologies and communities across Southeast Asia.

This paper will outline the granular frontiers of global trade, as larger and larger container ports are being dredged and reclaimed, requiring immense amounts of sand to be extracted at low cost, often with devastating consequences for climatically vulnerable regions and ecosystems. This is especially salient as Singapore also plans on using reclamation as a strategy to mitigate sea level rise: the humble pile of sand becomes at once an infrastructure of global trade, accelerating climate precarity, and the basis of mitigating it, at the cost of communities and ecologies elsewhere. For the container to flow seamlessly between land and sea, at ever-increasing volumes, sand will need to be mercilessly extracted from the granular frontier to expand the interfaces of global trade.
Analysing the impact of disrupted container shipping networks on climate precarity

Zhongyun Yue, John Mangan
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

Maritime transport has for centuries played a key role in world development with the International Transport Forum estimating that today some 70% of the world’s total freight tonne-kilometres are carried by sea. Within this historical timeline shipping containers are a relatively recent development (the first ‘boxes’ were carried on an ageing tanker ship in 1956), however in the intervening decades containerisation has played a key role in the development of global trade. Dubbed the ‘Humble Hero’ by the Economist magazine it has been contended that containerisation has been more of a driver of globalisation than all trade agreements in the past 50 years taken together. The role of emissions from shipping - currently estimated at between 2-3% of global total CO2 emissions - is coming into sharper focus especially as the sector has been slower to decarbonise than is the case with other sectors.

Within the world fleet container ships account for the largest share of shipping’s emissions. Various technical and operational improvements are planned to reduce container ships carbon footprint (UNCTAD for example observe that the easiest and cheapest way to reduce emissions is to reduce ship speed). What however happens to carbon footprint reduction potential when global container shipping networks are disrupted by major events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the blockage of the Suez canal? This paper reports on a PhD research project which has analysed the container shipping network between China and Europe, and simulated the impact of disruptions to that network. What emerges are insights into a complex web of actors, processes and practices which highlight the challenges associated with decarbonising the container shipping sector.
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The contribution of ports to reducing container shipping’s role in climate precarity

John Mangan, Eleni Bougioukou, Alan Murphy, Haris Patsios
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

The role of emissions from shipping - currently estimated at between 2-3% of global total CO2 emissions - is coming into sharper focus today especially as the sector has been slower to decarbonise than is the case with other sectors. In addition the UK government’s sixth Carbon Budget will for the first time incorporate the UK’s share of international shipping emissions. There is thus a pressing need to accurately measure and investigate both technological developments and improvements in operating practices that can reduce shipping’s carbon footprint. While ports play a key interface role in end to end transport chains, much of the current research focus on decarbonising these chains is on ships and shipping.

The purpose of this paper is to (i) highlight the key ways in which ports can aid in decarbonising transport chains especially in the context of container shipping (e.g. provision of shore side power, use of data and digital applications, use of inland / dry ports and port-centric logistics strategies) and (ii) demonstrate this through insights gained from two recent studies viz. a PhD research project on the development of smart, green and sustainable ports, and modelling of certain key energy processes at the Port of Tyne. We aim to show that while significant advances can be made in decarbonising shipping via a focus on ‘over the horizon’ activity (i.e. the ship voyage), innovations at the port interface can too make a significant contribution to reducing the carbon footprint associated with container shipping.
Revealing The Geographies of Sofa-Surfing

Kieran Green
Plymouth University, UK

Abstract

‘Sofa-surfing’ is a significant aspect of homeless that remains largely invisible to geographers and practitioners (Clarke et al. 2015; AIHW, 2016). In the UK, estimates suggest that there are 110’000 people sofa-surfing (Fitzpatrick et al. 2021), and one in five young people have sofa-surfed (Clarke et al. 2015). Sofa-surfing refers to the practice of living in a host’s home, without a right to reside, in the absence of more permeant accommodation. The arrangement is usually transitory, with the subject ‘surfing’ between communal and unused spaces as opportunities arise.

Although geographers have examined the experiences of homeless people in many different spaces, including the street, in hostels, spaces of care, and, ultimately being housed (Cloke et al. 2007; Johnsen et al. 2005; Boland et al. 2021), little attention has been given to the lifestyles and spaces of sofa-surfing. Thus, this paper outlines seven cartographies of sofa-surfing. These cartographies, such as the ‘homebodies’ who stay dependent on local family, are spatially informed set of identities, performances, and mobilities, enacted in pursuit of, and response to the temporalities of the home (Cloke et al. 2007). A temporality guided by a cosmopolitan ethic of hospitality, and the conditional and discreetional acceptance of the guest (McNulty, 2007).
Forest bathing without forest

Hiroko Oe
Bournemouth University, UK

Abstract

This study examines digital environments and well-being in the post-pandemic era, rethinking health in the age of symbiosis with COVID-19 in the context of the digital age, and in terms of the subjective sense of wellbeing brought about by virtual forest bathing in digital space.

Since the COVID era, we seem to be more willing than before to share experiences of interaction in digital space and to engage with nature in virtual space. This recent phenomenon, unexpectedly revealed by Lockdown, seems to suggest that it is worth discussing again the impact of our engagement with nature in digital space on our physical and mental health.

The Covid-19 pandemic, an unprecedented experience, has posed significant economic, environmental and social challenges. Therefore, this study quantitatively examines the impact of forest bathing (broadly speaking, virtual contact with nature and the environment) in a virtual space, with anyone and everyone, at any time, without having to go out to the actual forest, on people’s subjective health.

This study uses a semi structural equation model to develop an implications for relevant stakeholders, and also this study will propose a measurements with an analytical framework for further study.
Using technology to connect with nature through COVID-19 pandemic

Marta Głowacka
Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Poland

Abstract

COVID-19's idea Mick has made many people interested in growing houseplants and gardening at home, even as they are limited in their ability to go out and interact outdoors. Another option is to connect with nature with the help of technology. Connecting through technology takes many forms, from using apps to identify plants during walks, watching nature-themed programmes on TV, visiting distant places using webcams and sharing nature-themed photos on social media.

The range of technologies for connecting with nature is so diverse that most people will find something that works for them. However, the question remains as to how these technologies were actually used throughout the pandemic. Have they been used to replace or enjoy contact with nature? And have they actually brought us closer to nature? In my presentation, I will look at various technologies that support human contact with nature and explore possible answers to the above questions.
Value co-creation and learning from tourism practices in Japan: Edo people’s wisdom to Anime pilgrimages today

Hiroko Oe¹, Max Weeks²
¹Bournemouth University, UK. ²Brockenhurst College, UK

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between the natural environment and humans through examples of ‘sacred pilgrimages’ in Japan. Specifically, the study qualitatively examines the Japanese people’s awareness of their relationship with, awe of and conservation of nature in their spirituality, using the case of the pilgrimage to Daisen in the Edo period and the contemporary anime pilgrimage.

Japanese pop culture, including anime, is a mainstream part of contemporary Japanese culture and attracts fans from all over the world, but few studies have focused on the inclusion of nature-related and symbiotic themes in Japanese anime narratives.

My preparatory research has shown that pilgrimages to sacred anime sites contribute to the branding of local communities, as well as the awareness of pilgrims and local residents of the natural assets of the area in question. In fact, in Japan, ‘forest anime’ set in Saitama Prefecture (e.g. Totoro, Heisei Raccoon Battle Pompoko, Yamanosume) have incorporated the rich local natural and mountain scenery into their plots, with pilgrims visiting key locations as holy places and communicating their attractions on their blogs and vlogs. And interestingly, these contemporary anime stories are richly illustrated with the essence of traditional Japanese culture, such as the natural beauty of forests, shrines and temples.

In addition, many discussions of sustainable values can be found in contemporary anime works, such as citizens’ pilgrimages to forests in the Edo period, co-creation and collaboration with nature through excursions, and the recycling-oriented Edo period’s culture of living in harmony with nature and ‘mottainai’.

This study examines the relationship between people and nature from the wisdom and lifestyle of the Japanese people from the Edo period to the present day, on the theme of the spread of environmentally conscious behaviour and awareness in the way of life of modern people.
City resilience and increase communities’ preparedness for natural disasters

Ediz Akcay
Bournemouth University, UK

Abstract

In urban areas, more than 50% of the world's population is living on just 2% of the land surface. As such the impact of disasters, such as earthquakes in these locations has a significant impact on social and economic activities. Many cities that experience earthquakes are located in Asia and developing countries and these natural disasters can be very challenging to populations who are already experiencing a range of social and economic difficulties. It is not only earthquakes, but severe weather events, like typhoons and storms (such as those seen in Istanbul and Tokyo in 2019) possibly caused by climate change, that can create community disaster zones. It is worth considering then, how city resilience can be increased in these areas to secure citizens’ safe lives and activities (Yazar et al., 2019).

It has been proposed that city resilience largely relies on the performance of strong and resourceful citizens (Hernantes et al., 2019). In order to achieve a resilient city, it is argued, the city has to have good established partnerships amongst the population and the many organisations that function in these spaces; the cities internal and external stakeholders. In an age of fast urbanization and growing disaster dangers and vulnerabilities, it is important to consider the whole idea of city resilience. This study aims to present some actionable implications on this topic for policy makers, researchers, and practitioners working in both public and private sectors.

This presentation will provide a basic idea how to embed the policies of UN SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals when we explore how to support and sustain the city resilience for the future.
How to increase our awareness and readiness using cyber space technologies: A discussion based on our experiences on South-East Asia regions

Sitsada Sartamorn, Hiroko Oe
Bournemouth University, UK

Abstract

Japan, Thailand and South-East Asia, where the presenters live, have been affected by natural disasters such as typhoons and floods, which seem to be increasing in severity, partly due to the recent warming of the region. In order to keep citizens safe, it is necessary to prepare for potential natural disasters and increase public awareness and preparedness.

The authors have focused on the potential for disaster mitigation through tireless training and raising awareness of disaster preparedness in advance, and have conducted a number of empirical studies (e.g. Oe & Kawakmi, 2021; Oe & Yamaoka, 2022). In the process, the importance of ICT-based virtual learning schemes, information sharing, archiving and transmission has just been highlighted. At the same time, however, the need for a safety net for disabled and vulnerable citizens who have difficulty in accessing important information has also been highlighted (Quayle et al., 2021).

Therefore, as a practical solution way to increase community preparedness by building community-based safety nets (Oe and Yamaoka, 2022), this study focuses on the propagation of learning and awareness in virtual spaces, an advanced technology, such as metaverse. Based on this, the possibilities and prospects of promoting simulated experiences and awareness in virtual spaces are discussed.

The presentation links to the work of the previous speaker m, Dr Akcay, on ‘urban resilience’. It also discusses how the UN SDGs (Goals 11 and 17) can be integrated into urban resilience development through supporting vulnerable populations.
The ecological wisdom and way of life of the Jomon people, handed down through 10,000 years of time and space

Yasuyuki Yamaoka
The Open University of Japan, Japan

Abstract

In Japan, the 13,000-year period from 15,000 to 2,400 years ago is collectively known as the Jomon period, and the lifestyle developed during this period is collectively known as the Jomon culture. The Jomon culture was considered to be an extension of the Stone Age, when people lived a primitive lifestyle of hunting and plant gathering. However, recent research using state-of-the-art technology to study archaeological sites, pottery hollows and DNA analysis has revealed that the Jomon lived a highly cultured, sedentary lifestyle under the motto of living in harmony with the environment. The study of the Jomon period is truly a developing field, and new discoveries are being made every day, rewriting existing academic knowledge. This research is structured with the aim of learning from the wisdom of our ancestors who lived through the Jomon period, in the context of today's situation in which modern people are seeking to live in harmony with the global environment, with a desire for recycling-oriented economic activities.

The recycling-oriented society of the Jomon period is an alternative to the modern lifestyle of mass production and mass consumption, and provides us with pioneering wisdom as a precursor to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
Building resilient city-regional food systems: Innovative ways to improve the sustainability of public food procurement

Tess Hayton, Rebecca St. Clair, Maria Sharmina
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted supply chains and livelihoods and exposed the fragility of parts of our food system, highlighting the need to build resilience into the pathways to recovery (Garnett, Doherty, & Heron, 2020). Given that approximately £2 billion is spent annually by the UK Government on food for the public sector, public food procurement is a powerful tool that can be used to substantially improve the sustainability of the food consumed by large numbers of people (EFRA Committee, 2021; Morley, 2021).

Our research explores examples of innovative food procurement practices through interviews with stakeholders from across the food system in the public, private and voluntary sectors in the UK. We found that procurement policies of local authorities and anchor institutions can drive positive change in food systems through a variety of interventions, ranging from food waste auditing, collaboration and investment to establishing and improving standards and processes. We also considered ways that dynamic food procurement systems – which facilitate access to large procurement contracts for smaller producers - can help local authorities meet sustainability goals while developing local economies.

Diminished local government resources, outsourcing, and fragmentation of local services have resulted in a landscape that can be resistant to change (Lever, Sonnino, & Cheetham, 2019). With these challenges in mind, our research proposes specific recommendations to support UK city-regions build more sustainable food systems while meeting their environmental commitments.
Mapping World Ending Fires and Flames of Liberation: Exploring Decolonisation, Possibilities and Meanings for Sikh Sovereignty

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Abstract

Today, India occupies space within neo-liberal discourse as “the world's largest democracy” yet for the Sikh people of Punjab, and other minoritised communities, discourse on democracy and decolonisation do not offer space to explore what it means to exist as sovereign people. This session explores coordinates to understand the contemporary struggle for Sikh sovereignty and Khalistan beyond the binaries of modernity and coloniality, but instead, rooted in the Sikh imaginary. In other words, I explore the geographies of the Sikh imaginary and life otherwise, outside and on the ashes of, existing militarised borders. By confronting and naming “Indian-ness” as an ongoing colonial project, I begin the work of (re)imagining a ‘recovery’ that prioritizes a whole world, rooted in neoliberal capitalist ordering, that was reduced to ashes, yet we survive and continue to dream of liberation. With ongoing processes of displacement, borders, genocide, criminalisation, and colonisation, racialized people across the globe and in the third-world still retain coordinates for liberation and a world otherwise.

The coordinates that exist within Sikh memory and struggle require a deeper look into what the Sikh people are fighting for and meanings this holds for the liberatory world that they envision. When academic and political discourse engages in questions about Sikh sovereignty, it is reduced and termed as “etho-nationalist” or “religious” conflict. Within the Indian State’s borders, and its imperialist allies, the politics of Sikh struggle have no space and the struggle itself is simply termed “terrorism”. This session concludes by raising these tensions to reimagine what it means for Sikhs to exist beyond colonial and capitalist orderings, defy current imaginations and configurations of nation-states, and explore different spatial possibilities for Sikh sovereignty.
Privileged lives, privileged wives? Exploring stories of mobile spouses

Aija Lulle
Loughborough University, UK

Abstract

In this paper, I explore self-published narratives and diaries of spouses who can be characterised as privileged migrants or ‘anchors’ at home, waiting for their mobile spouses. I focus on three groups: spouses of academic researchers, military personnel and athletes. The data draws on digital ethnography carried out in 2022 (ongoing) and covers 2010 to 2022. I review stories of spouses through the lenses of mobile spouse literature, liberal migration regimes and writings on privilege. I argue that all these strands of literature reveal versions of the family, which fall short compared to versions of the familyhood by narrators themselves. I aim to shed light on processes of individualisation, which erode notions of care, family and intimacy.
Inhabiting the slippery terrain between the legal and illegal: informal modes of governance in peri-urban housing development in Gurgaon, India

Devra Waldman
Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy

Abstract

In this presentation, I will introduce my project in the Inhabiting Radical Housing ERC project and my role in the Beyond Habitation Lab. By focusing on the mechanisms through which the state utilizes flexible interpretations of law to facilitate the removal of land-owning citizens from agricultural land in Gurgaon, I am interested in how informality as a technique of rule reshapess ideas of home, inhabitation, and desirable forms of (urban) citizenship. I aim to explore the porous nature of bureaucracy and detail the specific soft spots in informal and formal land acquisition systems and land claims that are negotiated and manipulated for extra-economic change making in housing development. The goal is to excavate how the legal system is wielded against legitimate, land-tenured citizens in ways marked differently to informal settlements, how these violent practices are resisted, the outcomes these inhabitation struggles, and how these struggles produce new and unanticipated forms of inhabitation in a rapidly changing urban landscape.
Deathscapes, Murderscapes and Workscapes in Québec’s Eastern Townships Fiction

Ceri Morgan
Keele University, UK

Abstract

Part of a larger project on Québec’s fictional “heartlands” (AHRC Leadership Fellowship, 2020-3), this paper considers how literary geographies of contemporary novels from Québec’s Eastern Townships can prompt new conceptualisations of ‘the region’ and ‘regional fiction’. Looking at select murder-mysteries by Louise Penny, Johanne Seymour and Denis Coupal, it draws on Ameel and others (2019, 2020) to reflect on the ways in which fictional and material landscapes come together to inform individuals’ understanding of spaces and places. Drawing on participatory research-practice in the field (see, e.g. Macdonald, Morgan and Wrigley 2020), the paper will consider how processes involved in the generation of new writing or literature contribute to a) understandings of bodily experiencing of space, place and time, and b) shaping the subdiscipline of literary geographies (Cooper 2022, private discussion). In so doing, it explores how reading (Heddon and Myers 2014) and writing can help make real and imagined places.
Leadership of transformative citizen collectives navigating climate change

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Abstract

The simple evidence of global temperature rises, changing rainfall patterns and more frequent or extreme weather events are indisputable and will severely impact communities and society as a whole. Conventional strategies and incremental adaptation are not sufficient to address climate risks and sustainability challenges, therefore scholarly attention has shifted to the concept of transformation. A major driver of deliberate transformative responses are bottom-up processes of citizen collectives and empowerment, where communities are able to self-organise. There is a wide and rapidly growing variety of such citizen collectives addressing climate risks and topics in different fields such as energy, food, biodiversity and water. These bottom-up processes require agent capacities to implement transformative solutions addressing climate goals in different contexts.

The presentation will provide insights in leadership and transformative capacities of citizen collectives, navigating climate risks (flooding, heat, droughts, resource depletion) in different regions in Europe. The key question addressed is: How and why do citizen collectives take the lead in navigating climate change, fostering transformation? The number of citizen collectives has increased in the ‘do-it-yourself-democracy’, where they have taken matters increasingly in their own hands. Examples of citizen collectives are eco-communities, coastal protection initiatives, zero-emission groups, agro-ecological initiatives and renewable energy communities.

Our assumption is that citizen collectives can potentially support transformation via bottom-up processes, contributing to resilience, community resourcefulness, citizen empowerment and social tipping points. Initiatives formed from the bottom-up by members themselves can enable transformation, by reshaping the shared identity of community members (the norms and values), thus motivating community members to act more sustainably. Furthermore citizen collectives provide an entry point for new novelties and strategies in support of radical transformative ideas. While these collectives are place-based, there is the need to diffuse and embed these novelties in wider scales to purposely increase their transformative societal impact.
Exploring place-based opportunities for just transitions in rural regions

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Abstract

Home to around a third of the country’s population (Eurostat definition), rural communities in Ireland were disproportionately harmed during the last economic recession (Faulkner et al., 2019). Within the context of international debates, these places could be said to constitute Ireland’s ‘left-behind’ places. While the country has exhibited impressive growth in the intervening years, this growth has concentrated in the Eastern region and more effective regional development is a core ambition of the National Planning Framework (2018). Delivering this in a context of decarbonising the economy is not just challenging economically. Ensuring that our responses to these crises are grounded in justice and do not exacerbate existing social, economic and geographical inequalities and negatively impact wellbeing will be critical in fostering broad-based support.

This paper explores place-based approaches to just transition in Ireland. It draws on three case studies to understand perspectives on, and pathways towards, more climate-resilient and equitable futures in three areas outside the major metropolitan areas. Effectively addressing climate change and social justice requires recognition that not all places are equal, with smaller towns and rural areas facing much more difficult transitions. Using the framework of individual and community wellbeing we consider quality of life alongside other material conditions and the ways these are shaped by the natural, human, social and economic capital, and influence capabilities. We argue that a multi-level governance approach that newly or differently empowers central, local and regional government working equitably, inclusively and in partnership with communities is crucial. The first step in adopting a place-based approach to just transition is engaging in dialogue that takes account of local identities, assets, deficits, historical development patterns and capabilities. Effective place-based policy making requires an understanding of how territories operate at different scales, an appreciation of community assets and opportunities, and an awareness of how places are functionally connected. Without a focus on spatial and social justice, our responses to the climate and biodiversity crises will beget new crises of wellbeing and quality of life, and more ‘left-behind places’.
Exploring perceptions of e-micromobility in Leeds, UK

Gemma Bridge
Independent public and oral health researcher and Running Mayor of Leeds, UK

Abstract

Micromobility vehicles such as electric scooters, cargo bikes and electric pedal assisted bicycles are increasing in popularity. In England, 25% of trips are under 1 mile, and 68% are under 5 miles in length. Most of these journeys are completed using private cars. However, these could be completed on foot, bike or scooter. Whilst power assisted micromobility modes constitute active travel to a lesser (e-scooters) or greater (e-bikes) extent, alongside other active modes of travel, they can help to reduce private car use thereby improving traffic congestion, reducing pollution and creating healthier populations.

Leeds, like many other cities in the UK, has committed to achieving net-zero by 2030. Reducing private car use, through promoting micromobility usage can help to reach such goals. But questions remain about how power assisted micromobility vehicles might fit into current transport networks, what role they may play in promoting or increasing transport inequalities and how they are perceived by communities in terms of their sustainability, affordability, safety and accessibility.

An online survey and panel discussion were conducted to explore perceptions of e-micromobility vehicles amongst people living, working and studying in Leeds. Members of the public completed the online survey, whilst council policy makers, transport planners, active travel and micromobility researchers and volunteers, took part in the panel discussion.

The findings of this study highlight the barriers to greater e-micromobility usage, including range anxiety, uncertainty about where they can be ridden, and safe storage. Improvements to infrastructure, training opportunities, and shared vehicle schemes were highlighted as being opportunities to increase usage. The results provide insights that can help guide the actions of Leeds City Council, and other areas, relating to active travel and e-micromobility, which could inform and support the cities ambition to achieve net zero by 2030.
Naughty Scooter Parking: Do Perceptions Match Reality?

Nicholas Klein
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Abstract

Shared scooter programs often generate complaints about improper parking as a hazard to pedestrians and as unappealing clutter on sidewalks, yet previous research has found relatively low rates of misparking. What do people think constitutes misparking, and how much misparking do they think occurs? Can interventions further reduce misparking?

We conducted field experiments in Washington DC and Auckland, New Zealand. We find evidence for the efficacy of three interventions. The introduction of in-app message reminders and the implementation of sidewalk decals both lowered rates of misparking. The largest improvement in misparking was brought about by the introduction of lock-to, thanks to a large shift from parking in the furniture zone to bike racks.

In addition, we assess perceptions of scooter misparking with an intercept survey in the same cities and polls of transportation professionals at four conferences. Both the public and transportation professionals overestimate misparking of scooters and underestimate misparking of bicycles and cars. We find that respondents equate parking compliance with pedestrian accessibility and tidiness.

Our results suggest that intuitive parking solutions that align with rider and non-rider understandings of orderly parking, such as bike racks or on-street parking corrals, improve rider compliance and may reduce public dissatisfaction with shared scooter parking.
The (im-)mobile e-bike: infrastructural components of an emerging micromobility practice

Karin Edberg
Linköping University, Sweden

Abstract

Electrically assisted cycling, e-biking, is a growing global phenomenon. Just as other vehicles, the e-bike is operated somewhere and in connection to other road users, and far from always in motion. By analysing interviews and diaries written by e-bikers in semi-urban and urban settings in Sweden, the relationship between e-biking and surrounding infrastructures of motion and non-motion, and its effects on the linking of e-biking to other practices, is under scrutiny. In the theoretical framework, practice theory and the roles things, objects and infrastructures can play in practices are combined with (velo) mobility theories.

Infrastructures often figure in the shadows of the analysis of mobility but, as shown in this article, have great influence on how these practices are performed and how they develop. Lack of parking possibilities can, for instance, limit the range of the e-biking practice. Infrastructures can thus facilitate or obstruct the connection between different practices.

The article further stresses that elements combined in e-biking, such as the electric motor, which gives voluntary assistance but requires pedalling and charging, gives e-biking a distinctive form compared to other micromobility modes and to car driving, and thus also to the relationship to infrastructures. Increased knowledge of this relationship as derived in this article can facilitate planning procedures and policy making and is important to better understand challenges and opportunities included in the transition towards a sustainable transport system.
Scooter Stories: User and non-user experiences of a shared e-scooter trial

Monique Taratula-Lyons, William Clayton, Anna Speak, Ian Shergold
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Abstract

E-scooters are the fastest-growing form of micro-mobility. E-scooters have seen a wave of popularity in recent years; in many cities they have sparked something akin to an urban personal mobility revolution. Despite their popularity, e-scooters raise several challenges for policymakers and transport providers, as well as being a divisive mode on the streets. Reports of conflict and tension around e-scooters’ safety for both riders and other road/path users are common. Additionally, there are questions over what mode trips e-scooters are substituting. However, to date there remain few academic studies into user and non-user experiences.

This study focused on a UK e-scooter trial in the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). The mixed methods approach collected data from 222 participants, and the primary focus of this paper’s analysis is on participants’ qualitative “scooter stories”: first-hand accounts of being a user or non-user of the public scooter scheme. Alongside analysis of the scooter stories, quantitative data provides broader insight into the scooters’ use and demographic patterns.

Our findings show that on the positive side, e-scooters are a useful, affordable, enjoyable, and flexible form of personal mobility. E-scooters provide a viable alternative to some urban car trips and can be linked to active travel (albeit not strictly being an “active” mode themselves). However, whilst scooters are sometimes replacing car trips, they are more often substituting for walking or cycling trips, a challenging finding from a health and sustainability perspective. E-scooters cause regular conflict between users of urban space; we explore legality, safety (of riders and non-riders), impacts on pavement and road space, intoxicated riding, and more.

We present our findings in the context of sustainable urban mobility policy, making recommendations for policymakers and other stakeholders seeking to mitigate the impacts of e-scooters, and harness the sustainable mobility benefits of this popular new mode.
Reframing urban coastal adaptation - which is the most appropriate policy wagon?

Larissa Naylor
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract

Climate change is expected to threaten the safety and prosperity of urban human populations, property and ecosystems in coastal areas. Human activities at the coast such as rapid urbanization and coastal protection continue to exert pressures on coastal and estuarine ecosystems in the wider context of a changing climate. These ecosystems provide essential services (e.g. buffering of floods, nursery sites for commercially important fish, recreation and amenity) which are increasingly threatened by the loss of habitat associated with the combined pressures of human activities and factors such as sea level rise and increasing coastal erosion. These stresses on coastal and estuarine ecosystems are predicted to increase in the future. Adaptation is required. A key question is how can we maintain, or reduce the loss of essential ecosystem services coastal habitats provide to society as we adapt to coastal climate change.

This paper presents findings of a rapid evidence review of ecosystem-based approaches to urban coastal and estuarine adaptation to climate change (the science side), including novel approaches to ‘green the grey’ where it is not possible to use conventional nature-based solutions appropriate in more rural coastal settings, and explores which policy levers or ‘wagons’ are most likely to enable society to deliver effective ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation (the policy dimension). This may also help us identify more appropriate language to support climate change adaptation and shoreline management. For example, could we reframe currently militaristic language used in shoreline management plans such as managed retreat or managed realignment to ‘multi-functional urban greenspace’. Might green infrastructure be a more effective policy lens by which ecosystem-based coastal adaptation planning can develop? This combination of state of the art biogeomorphology science, alongside identifying policy windows of opportunity to provide adaptation space on land for habitats to naturally adjust to coastal change, can help transform our perceptions of the land-sea boundary and improve the resilience of urban coastal social-ecological systems.
Making Sand Dunes Public: Creative Practice and North Norfolk’s ‘Living Dunes’

George Revill, Kim Hammond
The Open University, UK

Abstract

This paper addresses the challenges set by our recent research engaging publics with ‘living sand dune’ systems for coastal flood protection through creative engagement. It reflects on the implications of figuring some coastal defence strategies as ‘natural’ and others as ‘nature-based’ in the context of public engagement. The paper will focus on the making of a film, and a series of short documentary sound walks made in partnership with the Norfolk County Council (NCC) ENDURE (Ensuring Dune Resilience against Climate Change) project team. Together these resulted in the production of a ‘sonic postcard’ informed by Latour’s conception of ‘the spokesperson’ (Revill 2019). The paper will critically address issues of public engagement using these creative materials, in addition to questions of co-creation and strategies for giving recognition to multiple knowledges, practices and ways of understanding the coast whilst building public trust and participation in ‘nature-based’ solutions to coastal management.

Making Sand Dunes Public (MSDP) is an experimental project exploring ways to build trust and support for coastal management by engaging and enrolling local publics centrally in practical decisions concerning the management and planning of sand dunes as a natural form of coastal defence. It starts from the premise that current complex environmental problems, such as those related to climate change, require new, more creative approaches to environmental decision making. These will necessitate more inclusionary process, incorporating many currently neglected and unheard voices, constituencies and forms of evidence within processes that build understanding, exchange and trust in times of environmental uncertainty.
Social Acceptance and Nature based solutions for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

Elina Apine, Tim Stojanovic
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Abstract

Coastal flood risk is expected to increase beyond 2100 under all climate scenarios, along with coastal erosion rates. Historically, shoreline management has relied on use of hard engineered defence (‘grey’) schemes to manage these hazards. However, these ‘hold-the-line’ (HL) approaches can cause adverse impacts, such as coastal squeeze and habitat loss. Continuing global environmental change also implies increasing maintenance costs, thus their long-term sustainability is questionable in some settings. In response, soft engineered (‘green’) approaches have been introduced, which constitute more nature-friendly and adaptive solutions. Yet where people’s properties or interests are at risk there is often strong political pressure to provide protection. This has given rise to shadow networks where communities campaign against shoreline management policies. In this context, the social acceptability of coastal schemes becomes important consideration.

St Andrews, Scotland, provides an interesting case, where a dynamic coast fronts a golf course of global cultural importance and protected habitats. A range of green and grey schemes are in place or under consideration, including dune stabilisation, beach recharge, habitat creation, managed realignment and engineered embankments. Our paper presents the preliminary results of a representative questionnaire survey to consider the social acceptability of schemes. We explore significance of factors such as environmental values, perceived risk, cost-benefits, and trust in forming social acceptance. The study is part of the wider CoOpt research project sponsored by the NERC-ESRC Sustainable Management of Marine Resources (SMMR) programme. The implications of such knowledge are important in exploring the values and trade-offs between climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation and amenity benefits.
Challenge to the natural tourist destinations of Kazakhstan! The explosive growth of tourist flows in the post-pandemic period

Aliya S. Aktymbayeva, Zhanna Assipova, Yeldar Nuruly
Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan

Abstract

COVID-19 has made an unpredictable impact on the tourism industry all over the world, however, in some cases, it has brought an increase of domestic tourism development in Kazakhstan. There are a lot of studies that have researched the impact of epidemics on the number of tourists, and the profitability of global tourist companies however research about domestic tourism during pandemics is still limited. The development of domestic tourism is one of the key tasks for reviving the country's economy and maintaining high standards of quality of life. The situation of domestic tourism in Kazakhstan before pandemics was almost in deplorable condition. However, after the introduction of restrictions on international travel caused by COVID-19, there was a growth in domestic tourism development all over the territory of the country. Therefore, this paper examines the tourism development at Ile-Alatau National Park near the biggest urban area Almaty during the last years. According to the position and location of the Ile-Alatau National Park, in the most populous city of Kazakhstan, the demand for tours is increasing every day. And this has brought examples of overtourism in such areas as Medvezhiy Falls, Gorelnik falls, Kokzhaylau plateau, Furmanov Peak, Alma-Arasan gorge. This issue is solved by calculation of tourist carrying capacity. Research findings propose policy arrangements for regulating tourist flows for various private and public decision-makers.

Funding: This research has been funded by Science Committee of the Ministry of Education & Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Grant No. AP08855888).
The optimal model of agri-tourism or how to rural development by organizing agri-tourism: a case study of Lepsy county, Almaty region, Kazakhstan

Yeldar Nuruly, Zhanna Assipova, Aliya Aktymbayeva
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Abstract

The paper examines several models of agritourism and attempts to select the most suitable model for rural development of Kazakhstan, in particular in the Lepsy county. This area is still an underdeveloped market, which can bring quite a tangible profit, both for rural residents and the local administration. Almost the entire territory of the Lepsy area is located in a high-mountainous region near the Lepsy River. This area has a huge natural potential for the development of agri-tourism and its various types. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to propose an optimal model of the territorial organization of agri-tourism in the Lepsy county, the experience of which could be extrapolated to other rural areas of Kazakhstan. The research methodology is based on a literature review, field research data, as well as a mixed research method, where quantitative and qualitative methods are combined. As a research tool, an analysis of stakeholder questionnaires collected by conducting in-depth interviews is used. As a result, taking into account the specifics of the area, it was revealed that the agritourism development concept should not be reduced to one direction (model). It should include several models that are promising for the conditions of Lepsy county. However, it was found that the Western European model is most applicable for the development of agri-tourism in the studied village. The remaining models of rural tourism organization are not suitable enough for application and development, as they do not take into account national specifics, or require large investments for rural resorts and villages development or additional services.

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The evolution of community-based tourism development in Kazakhstan: a case study of Saty village

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Abstract

During last years of COVID-19 significance and importance of tourism types which are oriented on sustainability as rural tourism, eco-tourism, community-based tourism (CBT) are increased dramatically. These alternative forms of tourism may bring a great potential to contribute towards sustainable commonality and provide domestic tourism development. In Kazakhstan, and Central Asia only few scholars have explained the growth of community-based tourism in the region. This paper examines the Saty case study, which describes a vision of how tourism has been developed in chaotic way with national features and brings to community development. Saty is a village in Rayymbek district of Almaty Region (Oblast) of Kazakhstan. It is located in picturesque place under the Tien-Shan mountains and near the Kolsay lakes. Tourism in Saty started from its accidental beginnings to being a mainstay of the local economy. The growth of tourism in Saty is closely connected with other aspects of the social and cultural development of the community. The story of the Saty provides an insight into the possibilities for other communities wishing to take advantage of their natural assets towards locally driven development. The study relied on a literature review and unstructured in-depth interviews, which were conducted with a total of 20 stakeholders-respondents. A narrative of the study identifies the development of the CBT at Saty. The findings of the study claim the positive contribution of CBT towards destination formation and development. The overall idea serves as a valuable insight into themes promoting the merits and complications of CBT, especially in countries of Central Asia, as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and others, who has the same political and historical background.

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Supporting small and medium-scale agro-ecological farm enterprises to develop and use short local supply chains; actions by the Landworkers’ Alliance in the UK

Peter Samsom
Landworkers Alliance, UK

Abstract

The Landworkers’ Alliance (LWA) is a union of farmers, growers, foresters and land-based workers. Their mission is to improve the livelihoods of members and create a better food and land-use system for everyone.

Short supply chain, agro-ecological food systems can play a crucial role in developing more efficient, fairer and resilient food systems. In doing so they can make a significant contribution to tackling some of the big challenges of the 21st century including climate change, the biodiversity crisis and food justice. The Covid pandemic has highlighted the benefits of selling short supply chains and selling farm products through local and short supply chains is common practice for many LWA members on small and medium sized agro-ecological farms. However, changes in agricultural support, a greater emphasis on the role of land management in addressing the climate and nature emergencies, and increased interest from younger people to enter land-based work have seen an influx of new LWA members. Many of these new members, some of whom are new entrants to farming, and other agro-ecological farmers are looking to sell through a variety of local short supply chains while others wish to diversify their routes to market.

This paper will highlight some of the work of the LWA to support members to prepare for selling through short supply chains; to address barriers through cooperation and the partnerships it is developing to encourage growth in this part of the food system.
The emerging revolutionary subjectivities: The socio-spatial analysis of the November Revolt of Tehran

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Abstract

In November 2019, more than 100 cities in Iran witnessed widespread uprisings responding to the new state regulation of threefold increase of petrol price. Having been shut down internet, the insurrection was violently oppressed by military forces left hundreds dead and thousands injured within a single week.

Given the geographical width and the distinctive dynamic of the November uprising, we may argue that it constituted a turning point in post-revolutionary revolts in Iran. During the November uprising, Tehran as a centre of contemporary urban uprisings formed a specific rebellious landscape. Our geo-sociological mapping shows that not only the subjects of the revolt have been changed from those previous Tehran’s uprisings, namely the Bread Revolt of 1995 and the Green Movement of 2009, but also the geographical medium of the insurgency has been replaced. Drawing on the recent discussions on the interaction of space and politics (Harvey, 2012; Dièc, 2017; Swyngedouw & Dièc, 2017; Kaika & Karaliotas, 2014; Bayat, 2021), this paper contends that any defining categories that does not take the interpenetration of the spatial and the political (Lefebvre, 1976) into consideration would not be sufficed in explaining the emergent uprisings of Tehran.

Following this, we will discuss, the spatiality of the November revolt seems to bring into fore a combination of varied and pluralistic dissidents unfolding within a synchronic plain. Elaboration on the state politics of neoliberalisation and urban policing over the past two decades, we seek to get critically involved with the theoretical explanation of this evolving spatiality of the November revolt. Given the geographical specificity of Tehran, the aim of this paper is to show how the autocratic urban configuration of cities of global south can contribute to the recent literature of urban politics.
A Proposal for a Geography of Vulnerability to COVID-19 Misinformation

Santosh Vijaykumar, Gillian Pepper, Michael Craig, Helen King, Matt Baillie-Smith
Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 infodemic has affected vaccine uptake, undercut public health advice around preventive behaviours, triggered violent and discriminatory incidents. Extant research has identified individual-level factors that predispose social media users to believe misinformation and analysed how misinformation spreads in online environments. However, we have yet to understand the impact of COVID-19 misinformation in terms of its geospatial spread, the socioeconomic status of those affected and their level of digital access. This presentation will stimulate debate and elicit feedback on our proposed research approach to address this gap. Our approach involves using the social determinants of health framework to explore the extent to which the adverse impacts of misinformation on economically or socially disadvantaged communities are more pronounced and analyse geographical variations in the type of impact (e.g., social distancing vs. vaccine uptake). To achieve this, we intend to use a combination of geospatial analysis and automated content analyses to link large secondary geo-tagged datasets to deprivation indices and datasets reporting COVID-19 health outcomes. The approach is purposed to generate new understandings of relationships between misinformation and digital and health inequities and provide new geospatial tools for researchers, practitioners and policymakers to contain the future impact of health misinformation.
Local Accumulation and Captive Consumption: UK Home Office’s Asylum Support Contracts as Regional Service Economies

Anna Pearce
University of St Andrews, UK

Abstract

This working paper examines the how the entrenchment of asylum dispersal infrastructure in the UK over the past 20 years is forcing new dynamics of internal migration and value accumulation at local authority level across the UK. With Glasgow as the focus of my research, I present the asylum support contracts as regional service economies, reliant on people seeking asylum rendered as captive consumers by UK Home Office asylum legislation and policies. However, I will complicate this image of top-down migration governance through examining the historic and developing relationship between Glasgow, other Scottish Local authorities with the Mears Group, the current asylum accommodation provider in Scotland. Using this legislation, policy, the contracts, and qualitative interview data, I argue that this regional service economy both is fully enmeshed in local formal and grey economies, whilst its entrenchment creates the city as a node in both international and domestic migration patterns. This calls for further research into the nature and impacts of these contemporary domestic migration patterns, as well as regional service economies geared around migration statuses.
‘Other than White’: Racism and Belonging amongst New Migrants and Minorities in Peripheral Places

Anoop Nayak
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

The Northeast of England is the whitest region in the country, and to date rarely a focus of race and immigration inquiry. However, cities such as Gateshead, Newcastle and Sunderland are not only more diverse than may be at first imagined but offer compelling sites for mapping new geographies of race, ethnicity and migration. In this paper I focus on what is a growing category in the national census – people who identify as being of ‘Any Other White background’. Drawing upon research with 65 participants designated ‘Other than White’, I explore the spectrum of attachments that constitute this diverse category that includes, those of mixed-heritage, new migrants, asylum-seekers, and various members of faith communities. While this may superficially suggest that whiteness is an elastic, superdiverse marker, the study exposes how new racisms and topographies of power work to render these individuals as ‘less-than-white’. In doing so, the borders of whiteness are themselves being reconstituted, where it is seen to be recast, reworked and refigured in times of migrant ‘crisis’ under the shadow of Brexit.


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**Getting from here to allyship**

Tal Peretz  
Auburn University, USA

**Abstract**

When considering community recovery: what is the place of those not personally impacted? In this talk I consider allyship as an imperfect best position in relation to communal recovery for those not directly affected, and argue for intersectional allyship in research. For evidence, I draw on multiple qualitative studies with men's anti-sexist/women's rights allyship groups selected to highlight needed complexity in conversations about the place of allies in social movements and communities. For example, I spent a year in Atlanta with the predominantly African American members of a Muslim men's anti-domestic violence group and a gay/queer men’s gender justice group; attempting to apply the existing ally engagement pathway models to their experiences emphasizes the complex ways men's other intersecting identities shape their allyship. While the Muslim men's experiences add dimension to the existing model—especially regarding age and parenthood, online interactions, and formal learning opportunities—the gay/queer men's experiences cannot be accurately represented within the existing model. Finally, I apply key concepts, theories, and processes from this research to thinking about intersectional allyship more broadly, both as an object of study and a way of studying, in hopes that ideas and lessons learned from intersectional allyship research provide useful perspective for thinking about current trends in the field of geography.
Chair's plenary lecture

Siila Watt-Cloutier
Indigenous activist, Canada

Abstract

Siila’s talk weaves historical traumas and current issues such as climate change, the pandemic, leadership and sustainability in the Arctic as she humanizes all of these issues. Her story telling gives a coherent and holistic view to these important global issues as we as a common humanity attempt to recover from colonialism and unsustainable activities impacting the Arctic and our planet as a whole. She speaks with passion and urgency on the issues of today: the environment—the economy—foreign policy—global health—and sustainability, not as separate concerns but as a deeply interconnected whole.
Experiments in citizenship, belonging and sustainability within Edmonton’s green spaces

Sarah DeLano\textsuperscript{1}, Kevin Jones\textsuperscript{1}, Michael Granzow\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}University of Alberta, Canada. \textsuperscript{2}Lethbridge College, Canada

Abstract

Edmonton, Alberta has, like many cities, experienced an urban agricultural renaissance in recent years. While gardening has always been part of the City’s history and identity, the embedding of food and greenspace planning within municipal policy, and the growth of a number food security and urban farm initiatives have brought the garden out of the backyard and into the urban landscape at large. This transition has been characterized by bold visions for developing food security, building ecologically minded agricultural alternatives, fostering micro-scale entrepreneurship, and protecting agricultural lands. Yet, despite the flurry of activity surrounding urban agriculture, the boldest visions largely remain out of reach and fragile next to the more traditional urban development priorities of a growing City, including threats from competing articulations of sustainability and greenspace management. In response, we propose some benefits of rearticulating the ways in which we value urban agricultural landscapes, embracing the fluidity and uncertainty of these spaces. Beyond projecting and reifying urban agriculture as a discrete alternate, or fix, for the failure of modern food systems and urban landscapes, we suggest it is useful to approach initiatives in Edmonton (and elsewhere) as experiments in sustainability, and opportunities for building belonging, engagement, and citizenship in the City. In making this case we draw on findings from a study of competing urban agricultural imaginaries at a community-led urban farm, as well as a community-based research project which explored belonging and citizenship through the urban food practices of immigrant women.
Walking and wellbeing: experiencing time and being human on earth

Dino Gavlinelli\textsuperscript{1}, Giacomo Zanolin\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}University of Milan, Italy. \textsuperscript{2}University of Genoa, Italy

Abstract

TBC
Can music festival attendance improve wellbeing?

Christian Ehrlich, Robert van der Veen, Giulia Rossetti, Jeremy Zwiegelaar
Oxford Brookes University, UK

Abstract

TBC
Manufacturing Zones, Marinas, and “Order from above”: The marshes of state-private land development around Kampala, Uganda

Caroline Faria¹, Brenda Boonabaana¹,²
¹University of Texas, USA. ²Makerere University, Uganda

Abstract

The Nakawa district extends from north of Kampala, Uganda to the shores of Lake Victoria. A rich and delicate ecological area, it is host to creeks and springs, swamps and wetlands that sustain life in and beyond the city. In this talk, I draw on ongoing research with collaborators at UT Austin and Makerere University, Uganda. We center two key sites where land, water, and the political-economies of Ugandan neoliberalism mingle: the Nakawa industrial zone and the Ntobo/Garuga peninsula. Here, manufacturing and residential developments encroach on and degrade these silted spaces, dispossessing local communities, damaging plant, insect, and animal life, and foreclosing opportunities to glean medicinal herbs, collect water, and catch and trade in fish. A central irony of racio-colonial capitalism and neoliberalism, these publicly-accessible resources are all-the-more vital now, given the privatisation of health, water, and other public goods in the last forty years. Via archival research on these areas, and interviews with urban planners, district politicians, developers, and community-members, we trace how other forms of mingling makes this theft possible: that between faith in foreign investment, elite wealth-capture, “order from above”, and residues of colonially-grounded ideals of progress and improvement.

Part of a larger collaborative project on the feminist political-ecologies of global retail capital, we examine the machinations of contemporary development in and around Kampala, the stakes for local communities - particularly low-income women, and the socio-environmental impacts on wetland ecologies in Uganda.
Restarting tourism in Italy: could PNRR be a new policy for sustainable development?

Carmen Bizzarri
European University of Rome, Italy

Abstract

The Covid19 pandemic has, as is well known, led to major setbacks to the global tourism system. The Italian Government, thanks to the funds made available by the European Union through the Next Generation EU programme, has given to this sector a strong boost in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), granting a series of investments and financing useful for a new restarting, included in the culture and tourism mission.

The article analyzes the main guidelines on which this mission is based, trying to outline the future scenarios, highlighting the costs and benefits for Italy as a whole and for inland areas and old towns, which are currently very compromised due to the sharp demographic decrease and the ageing of the population. In this perspective, the paper focuses on the new evidence-based policy (EBP) as a bottom-up approaches for sustainable and participative tourist solutions (Camagni, 2009; Marchionni and Rejula, 2019; Scanu et al., 2019), Saltelli and Giampiero (2017) and highlights how the public and private partnership can develop sustainable, innovative, and competitive common goals.

In conclusion, the PNRR can represent an important turning point in this sector, as a policy tool aimed at encouraging the participation of local communities and their stakeholders in the realization of a new tourism offering provides development opportunities to for the marginal areas of our country, vertically expanding tourist products and innovating the entire whole system in a sustainable manner.
The wellness adventure in the Alps: a new perspective on sustainable tourism by Outdoor Therapy experiences

Stefania Cerutti¹, Paola Menzardi¹, Elisa Bacchetta²
¹University of Eastern Piedmont, Italy. ²Psychologist, Italy

Abstract

Italy and Europe hold a huge and valuable territorial heritage consisting of natural, landscape, historical and cultural diversity and richness, spread over an extraordinary variety of territories. One in particular, the Alpine arc, has drawn renewed attention to the potential of mountain areas as places of life, well-being and sustainability, positioning the Alps, and the environmental, cultural and biodiversity heritage it holds, on a new horizon of possibilities for the development, promotion and enhancement of territories. Among the most interesting and farsighted reflections that are gaining wide interest, also as consequently of the changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of global health, it emerges a growing recognition of natural areas, as contexts capable of leading towards new approaches of living, reconnected with nature and its rhythms, the recovery of wellbeing, health and sustainability practices that can result in new tourism and local development possibilities.

Within this framework, the contribution aims at proposing a reflection on the connection between tourism and psychology, as it emerged in the context of the actions and results of the European Interreg Alpine Space project HEALPS2. Jointly implemented by partner institutions from six European countries, in Italy an experimental activity was conducted by the Protected Areas Authority in the high Ossola valleys, in Piedmont Region, based on a renewed approach to health tourism. Some pilot experiences are presented, that combine the psychological impact of outdoor experiences with the tourist-recreational role of sport and activities in nature. This is what has been called Outdoor Therapy, a form of experiential psychological therapy that supports the person and combines the activities and practices in a natural setting with moments of thinking and sharing. The main principles that reside at the heart of Outdoor Therapy are: nature, adventure, spaces for reflection and meaningful relationships. With its great environmental range, the mountain element allows a total immersion in the environmental context but also in an inner introspection that facilitates holistic well-being and harmony. It also acts as an unusual setting, free from fixed schemes, that encourages and predisposes to the expression of one’s emotional, cognitive and relational states.
Regenerating territories: the Virunga National Park, an African best practice

Alberto Corbino
University Federico II, Naples, Italy

Abstract

The Virunga National Park, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, is not only the oldest protected area in the African continent, but, thanks to an innovative governance model, it is also recognized as a best practice for territorial regeneration. Despite the political instability of the North Kivu region, plagued by over 20 years of silent civil war, the Ebola outbreaks and the Covid19 pandemics, the Virunga Park has been building sustainable development to the region's community, thanks to the creation of a PPP that has greatly improved the levels of management effectiveness and efficiency in tourism and all the other economic activities. The purpose of this contribution is to illustrate this management model, also through the author's many years of direct experience in that region.
Goals and measures of regenerative tourism in a marginal area: the case of Central Sicily

Claudio Gambino
Kore University of Enna, Italy

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic cannot be classified just as a health crisis. Its side effects have subverted the world economy, shedding further light on systemic inequalities.

McKinsey has drafted a ranking of the sectors that had been greatly affected by the Coronavirus and tourism is at the top of the list. Hence, it is necessary to adopt multifaceted strategies that are suitable to meet the new kinds of demand, taking into consideration the primary need to reduce the ongoing territorial gaps at the regional and national levels.

The paper proposes some strategies to restart the multiple enterprises in this sector, in particular with regard to tourism in central Sicily. It suggests a plan to overcome the long-lasting problems of the hinterland but also to find new approaches that make cultural, tangible, and intangible resources available in name of total health security.

Therefore, if the inland is the area where change and emancipation from a multidimensional crisis happen through unusual innovations, it is also true that a double implementation process in the hinterland was recorded and that could become the symbol of redemption for most of the fragile and marginal areas in the region. The directions that guided this new path come from the recent projects carried out by the tourist district “Dea di Morgantina” and the future “World, Polycentric, and Widespread Park of the Mediterranean Lifestyle”. In the first case, a spontaneous gathering was organized and is based on the idea of both ensuring the continuity of the landscape and sharing a common historical and cultural identity. This identity is legitimized by a strong necessity to care for and promote the issues of a territory that is characterized by the sharp contrast between the great value of its heritage and its marginal appreciation.

Instead, the “World, Polycentric, and Widespread Park of the Mediterranean Lifestyle” involves 99 cities and aims at standardizing the numerous and greatest agricultural enterprises in order to foster the collaboration between the agri-food supply chain and the tourism industry. The ultimate goal of this integrated synergy is to generate a permanent holistic organism supported by a welcoming community.
Tourism governance in planning documents: Evidence from Italian regions

Daniela La Foresta
University Federico II, Naples, Italy

Abstract

The health emergency caused by Covid 19 has brought with it a consequent economic and socio-cultural crisis, resulting in an unprecedented challenge for the tourism sector that, more than in the past, now need a strongest governance inspired by an innovative vision.

The looming realities, which are completely different from what is known, requires tourism destinations to adopt new means and tools but also to integrate different models.

The acceleration of digital, for example, should be complemented with a revision and new interpretation of analog in order to innovate design, experience, products consumed and content. Similarly, a responsible and sustainable recovery of tourism must synergistically complement the management of globalization, internationalization and new security needs.

Destination planning based on strong visions but also robust monitoring and effective data collection is a concrete answer for destination development.

In a theoretical framework that envisages a strong territorialization of tourism policies, in Italy the regional authorities play a strategic role in the policy choices and implementation of the actions indicated by the National Strategic Plan. This choice, although respectful of the precise geographical areas, nevertheless results in a dissimilarity of objectives, means and procedures.

This research aims to outline Italian Regional Covid-19 exit strategies for tourism and to compare, analyze, and synthesize the different approaches and strategies between Italian regions touristic plans. The method on which the work rests aims to foster, through the criterion of matrix analysis, a geographical reading of tourism policies and development strategies referable to specific local contexts.

Sarah Marie Hall
University of Manchester, UK

Abstract

TBC
Structuristic Art - wellbeing for children with a physical impairment

Onna Rageth
University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons, Switzerland

Abstract

The aim is to present a project called ‘Everyone is a Structuristic Artist’ (EIASA), which took place in 2018. The venture has been designed to give five children residing in the UK who suffer from the genetic condition Ectodermal Dysplasia (ED) a series of six Structuristic Art (SA) webinars.

The so called Structuristic Art technique is an easy-to-learn method through which almost any individual is able to transform their feelings and state of mind into a painting on a canvas panel, creating lasting legacies and ‘making tangible which was previously intangible’ (Ramsay and Barlow Sweet 2008: 37). The technique uses a range of different materials to apply several layers of colours, shapes and patterns to generate – eponymously – structure as well as depth. Felix Stoffel, a Swiss communication analyst and himself an artist, established Structuristic Art in 1996. Following Joseph Beuys’ (1921-1986) famous quote ‘Everyone is an artist’ (Bonami 2005), Stoffel wanted to turn the theoretical framework of the renowned German installation artist and art theorist into practice. The highly pedagogical and universal concept soon proved that the claim could read “Everyone is a Structuristic artist”. Every Structuristic artwork can be voluntarily registered and given a distinctive code; in this way, artists and their work become official members of the community of Structuristic artists. ‘Every picture has been created independently, yet it forms a part of a social community piece of art – nothing that comes even close does currently exist in art history’ (Zellweger 2018).

In the range of the present project, the blurring of online education and offline participation further highlights the advantages of SA workshops – Marques describes the portmanteau ‘glocal’, global and local (2013: 91). ‘Glocal’ events emerge through social interaction and artistic expression. EIASA fosters not only imagination but ‘individual creative voices, where the creative act opens a path to the kind of empowerment that enables proactive self-creation and, ultimately, the engineering of positive change at the community level’ (Berman 2013: 7); in short, co-creation and, exclusively, a sheltered online environment for visually different looking children with ED.
Reconceptualizing wellbeing for the sustainability of tourism destinations

Federica Epifani
Department of Cultural Heritage, University of Salento, Italy

Abstract

The objective of this contribution is to reflect on the concept of wellbeing in tourism, starting from the diffusion of the sustainability approach, in order to make it operationalisable (Loda, 2008) and, therefore, measurable, in order to support the governance of the tourist destination in the implementation of sustainable strategies that take into account the wellbeing of the individual, the local communities and the territory.

The consolidation of the sustainability paradigm has favoured a reconceptualisation of wellbeing in a holistic key, mitigating its distinctly anthropocentric meaning and binding it firmly to the environmental dimension and to social, economic and cultural equity (Constanza et al. 2016). This process of redefining the concept of wellbeing has also concerned the sphere of tourism and recreation, both in terms of scientific debate and policies, at all levels of scale. Furthermore, especially since the launch of the SDGs, there has been a progressive convergence of the scientific debate and the objectives of global tourism policies: in other words, research is called upon to support the implementation of effective strategies capable of pursuing sustainability goals.

In this sense, the role of geography appears pivotal in stimulating an integrated reflection capable of understanding and unravelling the complex and dynamic human-environment relationship.

With specific reference to the subject of this research, rethinking tourism and recreational activities as tools for the pursuit of sustainable well-being in a holistic key implies, on the one hand, a re-orientation of tourist flows towards destinations far from mass tourism, in search of the authenticity of places and healthier contexts, capable of fostering a more intense and perceived individual experience closer to exploration than to leisure (Gavinelli, Zanolin, 2019); on the other hand, an increasing attention by tourist destinations to the implementation of strategies responding to sustainability paradigms.
Strategic Festivals and Healing Events: Continuity, Difference and an Everchanging Context in the Delivery of Arts Care around Northern Ireland

Jonathan Skinner
University of Surrey, UK

Abstract

This paper examines the mission, legacy and reality of three generations of Arts Care CEO. Arts Care is a Northern Ireland charity embedding creative artists in health and community care settings as well as providing clown doctor visits to hospital wards. The organisation recently celebrated its 30th anniversary and is known for its art projects and events facilitated by its dedicated artists-in-residence (approximately 20 part-time artists employed permanently): these range from long-term community festivals to targeted events and the support of local groups such as a disability dance troupe (Inclusion Dance). Dance recitals; creative writing and poetry readings; arts and crafts from murals to textiles, pop-up studios, sculptures; drumming circles and film-making: Arts Care activities are diverse, unique and participatory and inclusive. Besides their external reputation for expertise and training to develop patients into artists, Arts Care has a distinct internal employment practice to support their artist employees. The result is a very low staff turnover rate as creative practice is stimulated between both types of professional practice (private and public).

This paper examines data collected across a fifteen year period as volunteer, researcher, dance artist, impact assessor and consultant. Besides this long-term participant observation with multiple positionings, the paper draws specifically from interviews with the last three CEOs of the organisation at the beginning and end of appointments (Lorna Hastings and Barry Macaulay) as well as throughout the duration of the position (Jenny Elliott). It will be argued that managing an arts events organisation necessitates political, economic and socio-cultural challenges and negotiations, as well as flexibility and adaptability to respond to the needs of respondents. Arts Care has gone through phases of development from origins and consolidation to arts as subversion, to arts health and wellbeing as social force (especially during COVID lockdowns) and, currently, arts health as partnership with industry – Arts Care Extra. In each of these manifestations, the wellbeing of patients lies at the fore of the Arts Care intervention. Together, they show how healing and leisure can share an important creative space in Northern Ireland’s stretched healthcare settings.
Older people, leisure places, and wellbeing - Older Scuba divers, Hill Walkers & Sea Swimmers in Ireland

Joe Tierney
Technological University Dublin, Republic of Ireland

Abstract

Humans have a longstanding desire to live longer and healthier lives (Ekerdt et al., 2017). Medical advancements, immunisation and knowledge regarding lifestyle choices have contributed to rising life expectancy (WHO, 2011). While adding years to life is important, equally important is to add life to years. Historically, Rowe and Kahn's (1997) model for successful ageing proposes avoidance of disease and disability, high cognitive and physical function, and engagement with life as important domains for successful ageing (Rowe and Kahn, 1997). Yet, as people age disengagement with aspects of life, and increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases, such as some cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis, and dementia among older people become greater challenges to healthy ageing (European Commission, 2014).

Many of these challenges may be mitigated through engagement in appropriate leisure based physical activity, and there is a broad body of research supporting this view. Consequently, the promotion of leisure activities which facilitate wellbeing is needed to encourage healthy and active ageing (World Health Organisation, 2020). Ideologically, increased longevity is an important achievement and something which humans pursue in and of itself. However, there are real challenges regarding healthy and active ageing, specifically with regard to quality of life (QoL) as a person ages.

Adventure leisure providers are ideally positioned to facilitate active ageing for older people of differing abilities, contributing to physical, mental and social wellbeing (Vega-Vázquez et al., 2020). However, more alacrity on the part of the adventure tourism sector to engage this growing market is needed (Hickman and Stokes, 2017). We need to dispel pre-conceived, negative socially constructed notions about ageing and adventure through positive promotion (Freeman et al., 2016). Reimagining active ageing through the lens of older adventurers, specifically scuba divers, hill walkers and sea swimmers sheds light on their motivations, interests and gives them a voice.
Hydrogen Risk Societies

Peter J Forman
Department of Geography, Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

Hydrogen is on track to become a major European energy source by 2050. In the UK alone, national hydrogen demand is anticipated to amount to up to 460TWh by 2050 (between 20% and 35% of the UK’s total energy demand; BEIS, 2020).

Despite the heralding of the imminent arrival of “hydrogen societies”, the societal implications of proposed hydrogen transitions remain poorly understood. To date, hydrogen research has prioritised technical and economic assessments of pathways to decarbonisation, whilst social research has primarily focused on consumer perceptions of hydrogen and their consequences for its adoption (Schönauer & Glanz, 2022; Trencher & van der Heijden, 2019).

This paper introduces a BA/Leverhulme funded project that will begin to document the wide-ranging societal transformations associated with the introduction of hydrogen-based energy systems. It begins by describing some ways in which we can understand energy-society relations to be reframed through hydrogen transitions, including the introduction of new actors and relations across different spaces and scales (local to international), and the emergence of new patterns of responsibility, dependency, and vulnerability between them. It then describes the project’s focus: tracing the geographies of risk associated with the formation of hydrogen societies. This involves looking at how, within UK hydrogen pilot projects, diverse risks (economic, (geo)political, environmental, public safety) are presently being imagined and anticipated, and how they will shape the organisation of everyday life in the future.
Post Covid priorities and opportunities for tourism co-planning: the case of the High Lands of Iseo Lake in Lombardy (Italy)

Federica Burini
University of Bergamo, Italy

Abstract

The paper aims to reflect on the role of tourism in the era of the Anthropocene, also in light of the challenges of climate change and of the Covid-19 pandemic providing a fitting context on the Future of Tourism in the time of global crisis (Holden, Burini, Jamal, 2022). Thus, the pandemic can be seen as a symptom of a larger systemic crisis of a rapidly destabilising relationship between human activities and the natural environment. In particular, the experience of Covid-19 pandemic has powerfully brought environmental issues back to the centre of attention, as the lockdown has shown new scenarios, as the direct environmental impact in decreasing air and acoustic pollution produced by private or public mobility (Burini, 2020). This has affected also on the perception of landscapes: the beauty of certain de-crowded natural or urban landscapes reveals a new image and sound of our cities and territories. In this context, territories and local institutions must activate new forms of tourism governance and co-planning in order to make the most of the new opportunities and satisfy the new principles that are emerging, such as the need to develop a more responsible, sustainable, slow tourism, close to and far from mass destinations and at the same time discover the role of digitalisation and technologies to better manage tourist fluxes and demand. The enhancement of landscapes and the participation of local communities for the promotion of local knowledge is crucial in this governance process (Burini, 2019), not only in order to meet the demand of tourists, but at the same time to promote a new way of living that can also contribute to fight the environmental crisis and the depopulation of marginal areas. The paper will open a reflection on a methodology of tourism co-planning - including public and private stakeholders, DMOs and single citizens – with the aim of creating an empowerment of local communities and at the same time developing digitally based solutions and other services, to promote landscapes and local knowledge.
Wellbeing, identities and connections: perspectives from young Pacific Islanders

Christina Ergler¹, Claire Freeman¹, Anita Latai Niusulu², Michelle Schaar¹, Tuiloma Susana Ta’uua², Helen Tanielu², MaryJane Kivalu¹, Amanda Hola¹, Yvette Buttery¹

¹University of Otago, New Zealand. ²National University of Samoa, Samoa

Abstract

Geographers, planners and other urban professionals conceptualise cities as embodiments of physical spaces that determine the day to day expressions of the life of their inhabitants. But what if a counter narrative is in evidence where the primary determinant of life is not a physical entity but a social and cultural connectivity. Where interdependencies transcend physical boundaries, linking families across cities, countries and oceans as was evident in our research with Pacific Island children in New Zealand and Samoa. In this paper we draw on findings from research with 83 Pacific children aged 3-14, which explored concepts of city, culture and belonging in changing and transnational Pacific communities. In this article, we advance two arguments: first we argue that for these young citizens the dominant narrative is not city living, but lives shaped through kinship, culture and trans-national communities. Second, young people’s narratives on their socio-spatial and cultural complexities provide new and nuanced insights into the multiple dimensions of young Pacific people’s overlooked and unspoken vā (wellbeing) affordances in urban environments. In doing so, we provide a counter narrative for understanding the neglected and under-theorised ways of conceptualising ‘city’ from Pacific children’s lived experiences.
Bio-necropolitics of debt and survival: stories and creative practices in pandemic times

Katherine Brickell
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic is not just a health crisis, it is an economic crisis of neoliberalism capitalism manifest in household over-indebtedness. In this talk I draw on collaborative research mainly in Cambodia (but also in India) with debt-bonded brickmakers and microfinance-dependent garment factory workers to explore the bio-necropolitics of debt experienced during (and in many instances predating) the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking on board recognition of biopower and necropolitics as ‘two sides of the same coin’ (Braidotti 2013: 9), the talk centres upon the experiences of these two precarious labour groups lived at the edges of life and death. It provides a geographically expansive and multi-scalar analysis of how their lives are bound up with the drive for urban transformation and fever for a fast fashion fix. Through in-depth and longitudinal qualitative interviews with workers, filmmaking, documentary photography, and artwork, the talk explores how stories and creative practices offer important insights into lived experiences of the bio-necropolitics of debt and survival in pandemic times.
Damage, recovery, and the geographies of military-civil entanglements

Rachel Woodward
Newcastle University, UK

Abstract

This plenary will explore entanglements between military and civilian phenomena and activities, in contexts of recovery from damaging events, and will ask what this means for political geography’s understanding of military power and institutions. A conceptualisation of civil-military relationships in terms of entanglement has emerged within critical geographical and military studies over the past decade. It provides a way to better understand the multiple and complex assemblages of people, materialities, places and practices through which military power is constituted and expressed geographically. Civil-military entanglements in contexts of damage and disaster can speak very clearly to geographies beyond recovery in conflict and post-conflict contexts, but in this plenary, I want to consider two rather different and less immediately obvious examples. One of these concerns is global civil-military entanglements around satellite collision, deconfliction and destruction in low earth orbital space, where recovery from damage is necessary for sustaining the civilian and military service support systems on which we increasingly depend. The other concerns civil-military entanglements through which military personnel are individually and collectively produced and reproduced, using the example of the damage caused by the UK state’s regimes of financial austerity to highlight how gendered, spatialised forms of personal labour sustain the recovery of armed forces. Both examples suggest ways in which military and political geography and geographers can find new ways of thinking through civil-military entanglements.
Abstract

The past few years have seen the rediscovery by political and media commentators of areas in post-industrial Britain characterised as “left behind”. It is rarely acknowledged that this attention to regional inequality has only come about after decades of political neglect and cultural erasure of these areas following deindustrialisation. Current ideas about regional inequality and proposed solutions to it – from the “Red Wall” to “levelling up” – are often conceptualised in ways that in fact continue this neglect, by homogenising these regions and imposing top-down narratives about their demographic and political nature. This paper will contrast these developments with new approaches in several parts of the UK, focusing on democratic localism or “community wealth building”, which have seen communities in “left behind” areas already addressing regional inequality, and offering their own alternative economic and social models, in a way that presents a more nuanced picture of both class and regional identity.
Beyond Exclusion?: The everyday geographies of those who are concerned about changes in sexual and gender legislation and cultures

Kath Browne¹, Catherine J. Nash²
¹University College Dublin, Republic of Ireland. ²Brock University, Canada

Abstract

In Ireland, Canada and the UK, there have been significant changes to sexual and gender legislation and social and cultural life since the advent of the 21st century. These spatially specific changes include the legalisation of same sex marriage, employment rights, and self-identification and gender recognition certification. The effects and limitations of these changes on LGBTQIA+ (and other sexual and gender minority) geographies have been theorised and empirically investigated, demonstrating that ‘equality for all’ recreates place-based normativities and power relations. As researchers, we have also examined how these changes are being resisted in spatially nuanced ways through conceptualising heteroactivism.

Building on this research, this paper draws on the Beyond Opposition research to explore the experiences of those who do not agree with, are concerned about and/or who actively oppose these legislative, social and cultural changes. In particular, we consider their everyday geographies (work/home/school/shopping) that include experiences of being what could be termed ‘marginalised’, ‘excluded’ or ‘being attacked’ in particular places for their views. We call for a new lexicon to be developed to understand these spatialities so as not to produce false equivalences and to enable a consideration of how people are, and should be, treated across a range of spaces.
‘Playing’ planners: Preschoolers share their experiences and hopes for playful and liveable cities

Christine Ergler, Claire Freeman
University of Otago, New Zealand

Abstract

Although children of all ages have the right to a voice their participation in urban environments, and particularly in creating child-friendly and playful cities, pre-school aged children’s voices are absent in these debates. In this paper, we explore pre-schoolers’ experiences in and expectations for their urban environments by drawing on a participatory research project that used photovoice and a tile-based mapping exercise with 76 children in Dunedin and Wellington (New Zealand). Findings suggest that young children, although widely absent in urban, policy or child-friendly city discourses, deeply engage with and value their city and its human and non-human inhabitants. The ‘playful’ city is for them more than access to and enjoyable experiences at play destinations; their ‘playful’ cities are safe, socially and physically connected and inviting for all ages and abilities, but their cities also raise broader questions about environmentally and socially just futures.
Place-based community organising for local recovery: university partnerships

James Asfa¹, Deborah Hann², Amina Razak³, Claire Rodgerson⁴, Eleasha Haslam³, Ellie Watson⁵

¹Community Organiser, Citizens UK, UK. ²Cardiff University, UK. ³Newcastle University, UK. ⁴Community Organiser, Tyne and Wear Citizens, UK. ⁵Alumni of Newcastle University UG student community organising module, UK

Abstract

This plenary session explores the transformative potential of place-based community organising as a theory and practice of social change. Panellists contribute real-world examples of university partnerships forged with local chapters of Citizens UK where action campaigns have challenged austerity and loss of trust in democracy. At this session, community organising is defined through the work of Citizens UK and the Industrial Areas Foundation, associated with the writing of Saul Alinsky and Ernesto Cortez and the legacy of the US civil rights movement. But the issues and lessons to be addressed are widespread. The methodology is based on the theory that if you want change, you need power. Power is the reason for building a broad-based alliance (of faith, education, trade union, and marginalised community groups): the root of the word being 'the ability to act' - power is a positive goal for people who are ignored or oppressed. Partnerships enable students and staff to train in community organising methods to achieve meaningful change for local recovery.

Panellists are drawn from several universities and chapters of Citizens UK representing paid community organisers and students and university staff trained in community organising methods.
Career ‘regression’ in the foundational economy: gendered work in UK care homes during Covid-19

Amy Horton
University College London, UK

Abstract

Based on new empirical research with UK care home staff during the pandemic, this paper identifies barriers to career progression in a highly gendered sector. During the pandemic, care homes received considerable public attention and additional government funding, raising hopes for a revaluing of this social reproductive labour. Such change would have a major impact on economic geographies given that social care is a cornerstone of the spatially distributed, welfare-critical ‘foundational economy’ (Froud et al. 2018). However, care staff experienced extreme work intensification and extensification – having to work much harder and longer in their workplace and commonly facing pressure to cover vacancies during days off. These changes were not matched by increased pay and improved conditions: whereas employers were largely indemnified against additional costs in the first two years of covid, care staff had to bear the burden without significant extra support and many experienced financial difficulties, as well as additional family care duties. Moreover, care staff taking on more senior roles commonly found the responsibilities to be impossible to fulfil in the context of extreme staff shortages, and stepped down from these roles. I suggest that austerity, financialisation and marketisation have produced a context in which career progression for the feminised care workforce is curtailed. The paper shows how these dynamics undermine potential for good work in a spatially distributed foundational economy and it contributes to understanding the distinctive geography of frontline work.
Sexual harassment as a men’s problem: interrogating the paradoxes of urban masculinity

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Abstract

In this lecture, I want to recast the sexual harassment of women as a men’s problem. One of the unintended effects of rightly privileging women’s voices in debates around sexual harassment is, that it ends up being imagined and domesticated as a women’s only issue - as evidenced in the routine victim blaming and shaming that underlines societal attitudes to sexual harassment. Men are the key protagonists in the story of sexual harassment as they are the perpetrators, so we need to discover what drives them to such behaviour.

In concert with feminist scholarship that highlights the severe harm sexual harassment causes to women, I will draw upon a case study of verbal street sexual harassment of female students, known as ‘Eve-teasing’ in India, to explore this issue from the perspective of young men who commit these acts. I will show that their routine street harassment of women is linked to the lament of a melancholic masculinity - one which deploys sexual harassment as a means of exhibiting both, a powerless masculinity that justified Eve-teasing as an outlet for frustrations related to an uncertain economic and marital future in neoliberal India and a powerful masculinity manifested in coding such street level sexual harassment as ‘harmless fun’. The poor employment prospects that these young men face under neoliberalism, coupled with parental pressure for idealized heterosexual relationships produce and legitimise a sense of victimhood among them. This sense of victimhood, it will be argued, presents itself as a melancholic form of masculinity which involves the internalization of an ambivalent attachment to the women that they sexually harass. The lecture closes by highlighting the paradoxes of young urban masculinities and calls for more attention to be paid to men’s role in eradicating sexual harassment.
Defending our cuerpo-territorio: how indigenous women in Latin America are theorizing extractivism and resistance

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Abstract

The expansion and intensification of extractive development in Latin America has led to the emergence of nodes of resistance throughout its territory. Within these nodes, women – of different classes, races, ethnicities, ages, contexts, and so on – have emerged as crucial political actors. According to literature on gender and the environment, women are often involved in these struggles based on their identities, socio-economic practices, and/or historical exclusion from power structures. However, when discussing environmental struggles in Latin America, the ways in which indigenous women are contributing to theorizations of extractivism and resistance remains understudied. This paper discusses the notion of the cuerpo-territorio (body-territory in English) that Latin American indigenous women are using. Drawing on various cases, I examine: 1. how the concept offers a theorization of, and a methodology to understand, extractivism; 2. how it places anti-patriarchal struggles at the core of transformative politics; and 3. how it highlights a spatial dimension of subjectivity and how, in doing so, brings to the forefront a posthuman subjectivity in struggles against extractivism. The paper aims to contribute to our understanding of the ways in which indigenous women in Latin America experience and transform feminist ruralities, and the ways in which indigenous feminist ruralities respond and aim to transform extractivism in Latin America.
'Disaster recovery' from the individual to the global community

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Abstract

Disasters, either the product of natural hazard processes such as an earthquake, or human-related processes such as a technological incident, cause damage to infrastructure and the environment, but also physical and/or mental harm to people either directly or indirectly. How the individual to the global community may recover from such events, differs on many factors relating to the severity and 'type' of disaster, the capacity to cope, socioeconomic and political systems and many more.

The panel will address various types of disaster recovery, drawing examples from historic, recent and ongoing events.
Airbnb hosting: Performing the occasional commercial home

Mathilde Dissing Christensen
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Abstract

This study explores how hosts navigate encounters with guest(s), show hospitality and navigate homemaking practices in a dwelling that can also be understood as an occasional commercial home. When hosting through Airbnb, guests are welcomed into the territory, or even home of the hosts. Such hosting unfolds within a tension between norms of hospitality and those of commercial exchange, between perceived authenticity and commodification. This challenges perspectives of the home as a sanctuary; a retreat from the public sphere and commercial world (See eg. Sennett 1993; Goffman 1963). However clear distinctions between places of work and the domestic home holds little accuracy, neither historically nor in contemporary times (Bennett 2002; Mallett 2004; Rose 2003). Rather this study perceives homes as porous connections between social relations and emotions. Neither public nor private, but both at once. (Brun and Setten 2013, 11). Furthermore, the Airbnb home cannot be understood solely as a localized process but is rather constructed as a hybrid of stillness and movements of guests, hosts and materiality alike. Producing a commercial home entails material and emotional practices, opening the home up to guests and making the home a space of encounters. Based on qualitative interviews with 33 Airbnb hosts, this paper starts by focusing on how hosts relate to their occasional commercial home and stages the home for hospitality. Secondly, attention is turned to encounters within the home and how boundary work practiced in these encounters to navigate relations and encounters in an occasionally commercial home.
Creative Arts & Communities: Homelessness, Houselessness and Health

Leah Chan
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Abstract

This paper reflects on experiences of participatory arts practices in homelessness and houselessness research. Disparate access to participation and support for people experiencing homelessness and houselessness have been exacerbated further by the Covid-19 pandemic. Conscious of the challenges that people have been, and continue to face, it has been important to question the ethics and limitations of participation in research. Working with Expert by Experience (EbE) groups, creating together is characterised by collective, individual, and institutionalised experiences of ‘recovery’ and ‘transformation’. I reflect on theatre for change and collaborative poetry, highlighting the entanglement of performance and processes that mark the tensions and becoming-together of transformation.
Boundary making and Indigenous geographies in Amazonia

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Abstract

How can contemporary indigenous geographical engagement with boundary making and boundary-crossing contribute to rethink dominant approaches to territory, ownership, and property? In this paper, I re-centre indigenous Wampis’ spatial notions and practices and reflect on the history of territory in the northern Peruvian Amazon to examine the potential of Indigenous geographies for spatial epistemological openings in postcolonial contexts.