

Sociology/USP 901, Spring 2023:
Urban Social Structure
Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm, Bolton 757

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 1 – 2 pm

Course Overview

In sociology, structural perspectives emphasize that understanding social organization and social change requires careful analysis of how individuals and other social actors are distributed across social positions, as well as the patterns of interactions and relationships between these positions. Such perspectives assert that examining the development and consequences of social structures is a more fruitful path to understanding human societies than attending to individual cognition or cultural values and norms, or “what goes on in people’s heads.” This course applies structural perspectives to the analysis of urban neighborhoods, cities, and metropolitan regions, while also comparing social structural perspectives with those that emphasize the social psychological and cultural dimensions of urban life. Our focus will be primarily on neighborhoods, cities and metropolitan regions in the contemporary United States, but we will also selectively compare and contrast these urban social structures with those in other times and places. While we will primarily consider sociological perspectives on urban social organization, we will also explore relevant perspectives from urban planning, geography, history, political science and policy research.

Required Texts

Bartram, Robin. 2022. *Stacked Decks: Building Inspectors and the Reproduction of Urban Inequality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jordan, Jennifer. 2006. *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Neal, Zachary. 2013. *The Connected City: How Networks are Shaping the Modern Metropolis*. New York: Routledge. Available on-line at <https://www-taylorfrancis-com.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/books/connected-city-zachary-neal/10.4324/9780203101728>

Perry, Andre. 2020. *Know Your Price: Valuing Black Property and Black Lives in America’s Black Cities*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Perry, Evelyn M. 2017. *Live and Let Live: Diversity, Conflict and Community in an Integrated Neighborhood*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Stacey, Paul. 2019. *State of Slum: Precarity and Informal Governance at the Margins in Accra*. London: Zed Books.

Sullivan, Esther. 2018. *Manufactured Insecurity: Mobile Home Parks and Americans' Tenuous Right to Place*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

All other assigned readings will be available on the course Canvas site in PDF format.

Assignments & Grading

Class Participation: I expect each student in the class to complete all the assigned readings each week and to participate actively in the class discussion. Attendance is required, though, of course, if you feel ill, you should not come to class. Absences due to illness, family emergency, etc. will be excused.

Response Papers: Each student will write seven short response papers over the course of the semester. Students whose last names begin with a letter A – M should submit a response paper for each EVEN week of the semester (see the course schedule below), while students whose last names begin with a letter N – Z should submit a response paper for each ODD week of the semester (beginning with Week 3, since there are no assigned readings for Week 1). Response papers should include coherent reflections that demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings and given them some thought. Each response paper may include brief statements of what you see as the major themes that cut across the assigned readings, findings you thought were particularly surprising or significant, and critiques of specific authors' logic, method or interpretation of evidence. Your response papers should NOT merely summarize each assigned reading but instead focus on identifying general themes and/or advancing critiques. Your response paper should end with 2 or 3 questions that will inform our class discussion.

Discussion Facilitation: During our first class, I will ask each student to sign up to be a co-facilitator for one class meeting. As co-facilitator, you will initiate the evening's discussion by making a brief (ca. 5-minute), informal presentation in which you provide a broad overview of the assigned readings and your reactions to them. Your informal presentation should NOT summarize each reading in detail, but instead identify general themes and present critiques, either of arguments or interpretations offered by specific authors or of the overall approach to the topic taken by the assigned readings as whole. Your goal should be to get the discussion going—so don't hesitate to be creative and even provocative! Toward that end, you should produce and e-mail to the class a document that includes at least 3-5 discussion questions about each assigned reading. You will then take a lead role (in collaboration with me) in keeping the discussion going throughout the evening's class.

Exercises: By the beginning of class during Weeks 5 and 9 (i.e., February 20th and March 27th, respectively), students will need to complete short assignments that apply concepts from network analysis discussed in Neal's (2013) text, *The Connected City*. Detailed instructions for each of

these assignments will be provided (i.e., posted to Canvas) by the Wednesday afternoon before each is due. While this is definitely NOT primarily a course in quantitative network analysis, students will nonetheless benefit from applying some of the network analysis concepts discussed in Neal's (2013) text, which should give students practice with thinking social structural terms. Toward that end, it will be vital to read carefully the "Method Notes" included in the grey boxes in this text. Each exercise will be based on one or more of these "Method Notes" and/or the Students will NOT need to use software (e.g., [UCINET](#)) but will instead rely on simple calculations with small datasets that can be done "by hand," though we *may* use the freeware program [PAJEK](#) for network data visualization. (I do, however, encourage interested students to take SOCIOL 952: Social Network Analysis, periodically taught by my colleague Dr. John Roberts, when offered if at all possible.) There may also be a third exercise during the second half of the semester based on Chapters 8 and 9 from Neal (2013), though these chapters are not currently assigned as required reading for a specific week of the course. I will make an announcement about this during our Week 9 class meeting (i.e., during the first class meeting after spring break).

Final Paper: My goal with the final paper assignment is to give you an opportunity to reflect more deeply on some of the assigned readings from the semester, delve further into one or more of the topics we covered (or a closely related one), and make progress on a major task that you are required to complete to finish your degree (e.g., a preliminary exam, your master's proposal or thesis, or your dissertation). Accordingly, you may select some variation on one the following options: a literature review, a "white paper"/policy recommendation, or a research proposal. Whichever option you choose, the final product should comprise approximately 15 double-spaced pages and should include complete documentation of your sources using ASA or APA format for both in-text citations and your reference list. Your cited sources should include, but not be limited to, several of the assigned readings from the course. Due dates associated with this assignment are as follows:

- 1) You must submit a one-page prospectus outlying your topic and approach at the beginning of class on April 17th. You should also be prepared to discuss your topic briefly with the class.
- 2) Your final paper must be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 pm on Monday, May 15th.

In addition, I encourage you to submit a rough draft of your paper in advance of the deadline, ideally by the last day of class (Monday, May 8th). I will do my best to provide feedback on your draft if I receive it after that, but I cannot guarantee that you will receive a detailed review.

Grading Scale

Class Participation	15%	Discussion Facilitation	15%
Exercises	10%	Response Papers	25%
Final Paper	25%		

95% = A; 90% = A-; 97% = B+; 94% = B; 80% = B-; 70% = C-; 60% = D- ; >60% = F

Policies

Attendance and class participation. As noted above, it is essential that you come to each class meeting prepared, having completed all the assigned readings and prepared to participate actively in class discussion. Attendance is required. *Repeated absences and/or failure to participate in discussions will result in a lower grade.*

Classroom environment. Many of the assigned readings express strong, controversial political views, explicitly or otherwise. I encourage you to challenge the perspectives offered by the assigned readings, by me, and by your fellow students. However, please voice opinions, disagreements and criticism in a respectful tone; I will make every effort to do the same. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the classroom environment provides both a venue for the free exchange of ideas and perspectives and a welcoming, respectful environment.

Grading: Except in cases of medical or family emergency or similar circumstances, late work will not be automatically accepted. Please contact me via e-mail as soon as possible in the event you are unable to complete an assignment by the due date.

Disability Accommodation: To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the UWM Accessibility Resource Center and inform me as soon as possible about special accommodations so that I can best meet your needs. The Accessibility Resource Center, Mitchell Hall Room 112, (414) 229-6287, <http://www4.uwm.edu/arc/>

Course Schedule

Part I: Social Structures, Social Psychology & History: Perspectives on the Urban

Week 1: Introductions (1/23)

Week 2: Sociological Perspectives on Social Structure and Social Change (1/30)

Mayhew, Bruce H. 1980. "Structuralism vs. Individualism: Part 1, Shadowboxing in the Dark." *Social Forces* 59(2):335–74.

Blau, Peter. 1977. "A Macrosociological Theory of Social Structure." *American Journal of Sociology* 83(1):26–54.

Britton, Marcus L. 2011. "Close Together, but Worlds Apart? Residential Integration and Interethnic Friendship in Houston." *City & Community* 10(2):182–204.

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

Week 3: Cities & Urbanism: Social-Psychological, Cross-Cultural & Historical Perspectives (2/6)

Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* 44(1):1–24.

Lofland, Lyn. 1973. "Chapter 1 / The Problematic World of Strangers" Pp. 3–23 in *World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Garrido, Marco, Xufei Ren, and Liza Weinstein. 2021. "Towards a Global Urban Sociology: Keywords." *City & Community* 20(1):4–12.

Chase, Arlen F. and Diane Z. Chase. 2016. "Urbanism and Anthropogenic Landscapes." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 45:361–76.

Sadowski, Jathan. 2020. "Cyberspace and Cityscapes: On the Emergence of Platform Urbanism." *Urban Geography* 41(3):448–52.

Jeffries, Michael P. 2014. "Hip-Hop Urbanism Old and New." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38(2):706–15.

Part III: Public & Parochial Spaces; Neighborhoods as Sites of Social Interaction

Week 4: Public Space (2/13)

Jacobs, Jane. 1993 [1961]. "Chapter 2 / The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety" and "Chapter 3 / The Uses of Sidewalks: Contact." Pp. 37–96 in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Modern Library Edition. New York: Modern Library.

Lofland, Lyn. 1998. "Chapter 1: Toward of Geography and History of the Public Realm." Pp. 1–19 in *The Public Realm: Exploring the City's Quintessential Social Territory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Blumenberg, Evelyn, and Renia Ehrenfeucht. 2008. "Civil Liberties and the Regulation of Public Space: The Case of Sidewalks in Las Vegas." *Environment and Planning A* 40: 303–22.

Britton, Marcus L. 2008. "'My Regular Spot': Race and Territory in Urban Public Space." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 37(4):442–68.

Elliott, James R., Elizabeth Korver-Glenn, and Daniel Bolger. 2019. "The Successive Nature of City Parks: Making and Remaking Unequal Access over Time." *City & Community* 18(1):109–27.

Week 5: Neighbors and Neighboring (2/20)

Neal, "Chapter 2 / Community: Lost or Found," "Chapter 3 / Subculture / Finding Your Crowd in a Crowd," and "Chapter 5 / Form / Getting from Here to There," pp. 11–49, 69–87

Cornwell, Erin York and Rachel L. Behler. 2015. "Urbanism, Neighborhood Context, and Social Networks." *City & Community* 14(3):311–35.

Underhill, Megan. 2021. "Managing Difference: White Parenting Practices in Socioeconomically Diverse Neighborhoods." *City & Community* 20(2):79–98.

Beck, Kevin. 2019. "Social Support and Residential Stability in Privately Owned Assisted Housing." *City & Community* 18(1):302–20.

Wang, Zheng, Fangzhu Zhang, and Fulong Wu. 2016. "Intergroup Neighboring in Urban China: Implications for the Social Integration of Migrants." *Urban Studies* 53(4):651–68.

Week 6: Neighborhood Boundaries, Social Cohesion & Social Control (2/27)

Selections from Shaw, Clifford and Henry McKay. 1942. *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Kubrin, Charis E. and Ronald Weitzer. 2003. "New Directions in Social Disorganization Theory." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 40(4):374–402.

Sampson, Robert. 2012. "Chapter 6 / 'Broken Window' and the Meanings of Disorder," and "Chapter 7 / The Theory of Collective Efficacy." Pp. 121–78 in *The Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Leverentz, Andrea, Adam Pittman, and Jennifer Skinnon. 2018. "Place and Perception: Construction of Community and Safety across Neighborhoods and Residents." *City & Community* 17(4):972–95.

Yesberg, Julie Anne and Ben Bradford. 2021. "Policing and Collective Efficacy: A Rapid Evidence Assessment." *International Journal of Police Science and Management* 23(4):417–30.

Week 7: Neighbors & Neighborhood: Case Study (3/6)

Perry, Evelyn M. 2017. *Live and Let Live: Diversity, Conflict and Community in an Integrated Neighborhood*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. (read all ca. 200 pages)

Week 8: Collective Memory and Urban Change (3/13)

Jordan, Jennifer. 2006. *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (ca. 200 pages)

Spring Break: March 19 – March 26

Part IV: Place-based Inequality in the Urban America and Beyond

Week 9: Urban Sprawl and Sustainability in Metropolitan Regions (3/27)

Neal, "Chapter 7 / Regional: From City to Metropolis," pp. 109–24

Laidley, Thomas. 2016. "The Problem of Sprawl." *Contexts* 15(3):74–7.

Rubiera-Morollón, Fernando and Ruben Garrido-Yserte. 2020. "Recent Literature about Urban Sprawl: A Renewed Relevance of the Phenomenon from the Perspective of Environmental Sustainability." *Sustainability* 12(16):6551–64.

Gonzalez, George A. 2009. "Chapter 1: Urban Sprawl and the Empire of Capital" and "Chapter 4: The Federal Government and the National Establishment of Urban Sprawl." Pp. 1–18, 53–66 *Urban Sprawl, Global Warming and the Empire of Capital*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Jimenez, Benedict S. 2016. "Externalities in the Fragmented Metropolis: Local Institutional Choices and the Efficiency-Equity Tradeoff." *American Review of Public Administration* 46(3):314–36.

Goetz, Andrew. 2013. "Suburban Sprawl or Urban Centres: Tensions and Contradictions of Smart Growth in Denver, Colorado." *Urban Studies* 50(11):2178–95.

Currie, Melissa Anne and Janni Sorensen. 2019. "Repackaged 'Urban Renewal': Issues of Spatial Equity and Environmental Justice in New Construction, Suburban Neighborhoods, and Urban Islands of Infill." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 41(4):464–85. doi: 10.1080/07352166.2018.1474081

Fang, Yiping and Anirban Pal. 2016. "Drivers of Urban Sprawl in Urbanizing China – A Political Ecological Analysis." *Environment & Urbanization* 28(2):599–616. doi: 10.1177/0956247816647344

Week 10: Urban Inequality (4/3)

Bartram, Robin. 2022. *Stacked Decks: Building Inspectors and the Reproduction of Urban Inequality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 11: Urban Inequality, continued (4/10)

Perry, Andre. 2020. *Know Your Price: Valuing Black Lives and Property in America's Black Cities*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Week 12: Manufactured Housing & Mobile Home Parks (4/17)

Sullivan, Esther. 2018. *Manufactured Insecurity: Mobile Home Parks and Americans' Tenuous Right to Place*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Week 13: Placed-Based Inequality in the Global South (4/24)

Garrido, Marco Z. 2019. *The Patchwork City: Class, Space and Politics in Metro Manila*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Week 14: Place-based Inequality in the Global South, continued (5/1)

Stacey, Paul. 2019. *State of the Slum: Precarity and Informal Governance at the Margins in Accra*. London: Zed Books.

Week 15: Topic & Readings to be Decided! (5/8)

A few possibilities:

Cardoso, Leonardo. 2022. *Sound Politics in São Paulo*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Naraghi, Askhan. 2022. *A Social History of Tehran: Space, Power and the City*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rhodes, Anna and Max Bebris. 2022. *Soaking the Middle Class: Suburban Inequality and Recovery from Disaster*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.