

CUSS NEWS

Newsletter of the Community and Urban Sociology Section
Summer, 2005

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CO-EDITORS' NOTE

The American Sociological Association will hold its 100th Convention this August in Philadelphia. This edition begins with an essay on public sociology by Richard Alba, Section Chair. As part of the centennial celebration, Harvey Molotch organized a special session entitled, “One Hundred Years of US Urban Sociology: What Difference Did It Make and How Can It Matter for the Future? The conference features two regular CUSS panels on Place & Health and Gender & Urban Space as well as thirteen roundtables. This edition contains a complete schedule of CUSS events including the Section Reception on Sunday, August 14, 12:15-2:30 PM at the Independence Brew Pub, 1150 Filbert Street next to the Reading Terminal Market. This edition showcases three articles on contemporary urban issues in Philadelphia coordinated by Chair-elect Anne Shlay and her Temple University students. Also, you will find the 2005 section election results and award recipients as well as new books and dissertations by section members.

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Public Sociology in a Conservative Era
Richard Alba
The University at Albany, SUNY

Michael Burawoy's advocacy of "public sociology" has had a profound effect on our discipline. The depth of the impact betrays our diffidence about sociology's status and future. Many of us are troubled by such indicators as the near invisibility of sociology books in general bookstores and on the review pages of non-professional publications like *The New York Times*. There is a search on for new directions.

"Public sociology" has created more excitement among us than probably any other idea in recent years, and for that reason alone it deserves scrutiny. I strongly support the notion that sociology should aim to inform audiences beyond the profession; and this is obviously a goal of many urban and community sociologists. Yet I want to raise four cautions about what I perceive as the general understanding of "public sociology" and its implications.

First, we need to be modest in our goals for public sociology, given the rightward shift in the momentum of the American polity. Most of us would place ourselves on the left side of the conventional political spectrum. Many of us entered sociology at a time when the polity seemed to be moving, even if very haltingly, in a liberal direction, toward the increasing use of state power to ameliorate social injustice and to remedy inequalities. Today, Republicans, quite conservative Republicans, are in control at every level of government. The momentum of the system is set firmly for the time being in a conservative direction. It can be slowed, as it was during the Clinton Presidency, but the political battles are largely over issues of the conservatives' choosing.

We need to be realistic about our ability to affect this momentum. Consider a crucial lesson in the results of the 2004 election. Since the historic expansion of the number of Ph.D. sociologists in the late 60s and early 70's, we have taught millions of college students. It does not appear that they voted to change the political direction of the country. According to the exit polls, both college graduates and those who attended college but did not graduate favored Bush and by a larger margin than was found in the electorate as a whole. Granted, we don't know which of these college-educated voters took sociology courses; but given the results, I suspect any difference we made was not large. Merely because we speak more in public fora, we are unlikely to redirect the political momentum, at least on a national plane.

Second, we need to place our creation of knowledge in the forefront of our efforts at public sociology. I am concerned about some aspects of the distinction that Michael Burawoy has drawn between public and professional sociology. While he acknowledges that public sociology depends on professional sociology, he appears to downgrade the latter's status. He characterizes professional sociology as creating "instrumental" knowledge and asserts that professional sociologists engage in "puzzle solving," hardly the highest of mental activities. Yet professional sociology produces knowledge of a sort that, through theoretical reasoning and empirical findings, can convince others who do not necessarily share the worldviews and political values of its creators.

The boundary between public and professional sociology is permeable. For the most part, the knowledge that we create as professional sociologists is not so esoteric that it cannot be shared

with outsiders. Most of us in doing research are also concerned with questions of public importance. Therefore, we should attempt to communicate that knowledge to larger publics, and in fact many of us do. At the same time, public sociology must not degenerate into a mere popularization of sociological knowledge and perspectives. Public sociologists should be capable of being professional sociologists.

The foregrounding of our knowledge creation is crucial in a political era when we should expect widespread deafness to our public voice. Moreover, the health of our discipline depends upon political actors because we require public funds. That is true when we consider that many of us, perhaps the majority, teach at public colleges and universities that are partially supported by tax monies and responsible to public authorities. What we have to say is often not what these authorities want to hear.

The emphasis, then, on our creation of knowledge is partly protective. But if we want to keep the respect of our colleagues in the academy, we need to keep the creation of knowledge as our main focus even as we seek to strengthen our public voice. We should look to the example of economics, whose public voice is powerful. Yet no one can deny that there is a vast literature in economics that is intended for a professional audience, indeed that is quite esoteric to outsiders.

Third, we should not shy away from accepting a few more conservatives in our midst. We are acquiring the reputation of being well to the left of the nation as a whole. As Michael Burawoy points out with the metaphor of the “scissors movement,” we have in fact become more concentrated in the left portion of the political spectrum since the 1960s.

In thinking about the spectrum of political stances among us, I suggest we look to the social-science disciplines that are more successful than we are in achieving a strong public voice: economics and political science. Both have a wider ideological spectrum than we do: providing a home to strongly conflicting views appears to strengthen, not weaken, their public presence. Nor does conflict weaken the public expressions of left-of-center views. No public intellectual rivals Paul Krugman, a Princeton economist, in terms of a critique of the Bush administration and its policies and the convincing articulation of alternatives.

Providing a home to a wider spectrum of views has certain advantages for our arguments. Hearing more conservative views may give us a better understanding of them, which could make our own arguments more effective. Having a few more conservative intellectuals in our discipline means almost certainly having some influence on them, and thus it is likely to mean the importation of more sociology into conservative discourse.

In this context, it is important to note the gathering assault on the academy as politically out of alignment with the rest of America. There is a convergence of two trends here: one is a long-term trend of disinvestment in universities, especially in the public sector. There has led to an increasing reliance on part-time academic labor, which is reduced to its teaching role and deprived of the opportunity to do research. In some states, such as my own, there has been tightening political control over public universities, exercised typically through trustees who are political appointees.

The more recent trend is the assembling of a conservative ideological assault on the academy. It is no longer just a collection of cranks like David Horowitz. To observe this development, one

need only track the discussion of the controversy over Lawrence Summers, the Harvard President. Having spent last year in Cambridge, I know that the questions raised by Harvard faculty go far beyond his remarks about women in science and have a great deal to do with his intimidating style of leadership. But for *The Wall Street Journal*, the controversy is a matter of the political correctness and liberal bias of university faculty. This view is more widespread than you might think. Even Daniel Shorr, usually the voice of liberal sanity, opined on National Public Radio that the attack on Summers was bad for academic free speech. This framing of the controversy should be seen as part of a sustained attempt to paint universities as politically biased and unwilling to entertain views that conflict with the ideological stance of their faculty. I believe it is also related to the finding from the 2004 election that, collectively, the major institutional homes of donors to the Kerry campaign were universities, Harvard and the University of California at the head of their ranks. Intimidating the universities provides another way for conservative Republicans to strengthen the funding imbalance between the parties and thus the political power of wealth.

Fourth, if we want to persuade larger publics that we have something important to say, we have to be willing to speak out on issues of great public importance. It is remarkable to me how absent our voice has been from the debate about Social Security. This debate, which has been dominated by economists, is one where sociology ought to have something distinctive to contribute. Here we have an attempt to undo the sturdiest strand of the safety net and, in an ultimate sense, to prepare Americans to accept a world of greater inequality. Its thrust is consistent with other policies of the Bush administration that seek to detach Americans from identification with a collective community of fate, in which injury to some is injury to all. The only attempt that I have seen to deal with Social Security privatization comes from a political scientist, Benjamin Barber, who wrote an op-ed for *The Los Angeles Times*: “Privatizing Social Security: ‘Me’ over ‘We’.” We should also be able to write effectively for visible outlets on this aspect of Bush’s proposal, but we have not.

The criterion that we keep uppermost as we consider speaking out on such public issues as Social Security is the “value added” by sociological perspectives. We should be wary of expressing opinions merely because we have them and feel strongly about their rightness. Confronting such a hostile political climate, many of us understandably feel a temptation to denounce that which we see as false and wrong, a temptation that grows overpowering when contemplating the dishonesties on the right. But we will be more effective if we harness that temptation to arguments explicitly based on sociological reasoning and research. Thereby, we will make the case that sociology has something to contribute.

Collectively, we need to do more to promote well-reasoned sociological opinion on public issues. *Contexts* is a wonderful innovation, but like any academically based journal it cannot respond quickly enough to the tumult in the public eye. Other disciplines are organizing outlets for the op-ed articles written by their scholars. History, believe it or not, has a website for this purpose (I thank Roger Waldinger for calling it to my attention); the economists, who hardly need help in this respect, now have *The Economists’ Voice*, edited by Joseph Stiglitz. Despite the energy that “public sociology” has unleashed, we have no equivalent at this point. We need one.

ELECTION RESULTS

Thanks to all that volunteered to run as well as congratulations to the winners of the 2005 section election:

***Secretary-Treasurer:

Neil Brenner, New York University

***Council:

Kyle Crowder, Western Washington University

Lily Hoffman, City College of New York

***Journal Oversight Committee

Peggy Levitt, Wellesley

John R. Logan, Brown University

Lincoln Quillian, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Mario Luis Small, Princeton

Jennifer A. Stoloff, Department of Housing and Urban Development

Barry Wellman, University of Toronto

SECTION AWARDS

***Lynd Career Award

Committee: Nancy Kleniewski (chair), Nancy Naples, Saskia Sassen, Roger Waldinger

Recipient: John Walton, UC Davis

***Parks Book Award

Committee: Chair: David Halle, Ruth Horowitz, and Barry Wellman)

*First Prize (split)

Mario Small, Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004)

Terry Clark ed., The City as an Entertainment Machine. New York: Elsevier, 2004.

*Honorable Mentions.

Andrew Wiese, Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Philip Kasinitz, John Mollenkopf and Mary Waters, eds., Becoming New Yorkers: Ethnographies of the New Second Generation. Santa Monica: Russell Sage, 2004.

***Graduate Paper Award

Committee: Mario Small (chair), Jerome Hodos, Angie Chung

Recipient: Andrew Scott Deener, UCLA

Honorable Mention: Virag Molnar, Princeton

ASA CONFERENCE INFORMATION

August 12-15
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*** CUSS SECTION RECEPTION

Sunday, August 14, 12:15-2:30 PM
Independence Brew Pub, 1150 Filbert Street next to the Reading Terminal Market

***CUSS COUNCIL and BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, August 15, 8:30-10:10 AM
Note: A meeting will be scheduled for the City & Community Oversight Committee during the conference.

***100 YEARS OF US URBAN SOCIOLOGY: What Difference Did It Make and How Can It Matter for the Future?

Monday, August 15, 2:30-4:10 PM
Organizer and Presider: Harvey Molotch, New York University
Panelists:
Martin Bulmer, University of Surrey, UK
Herbert Gans, Columbia University
Sophie Body-Gendrot, Sorbonne and Institute of Political Science, Paris.

***PLACE and HEALTH

Monday, August 15, 4:30-6:10 PM
Organizer: Mark LaGory, University of Alabama-Birmingham
Discussant: Lynn Cossman, Mississippi State University
Participants:
Kevin Fitzpatrick, University of Arkansas. Neighborhood Distress Factors and Health: The Case of Asthma"
Kent P. Schwirian, Patricia Schwirian and Lisa Nicholson, Ohio State University. Neighborhood Social Capital as a Health Determinant: An Empirical Test of a Bourdieu-based Framework and Model.
Richard Carpiano, University of Wisconsin, and Bruce Link, Columbia University. Neighborhood Ecology and Drug-Dependence Mortality.
Lance Hannon, Villanova University and Monica M.Cuddy, National Board of Medical Examiners. The Activities and Settings of Leisure as Sources of Inactivity: Explaining Growth Disparities in the U.S. Since 1965"
Brent Barry, University of Toronto. The Activities and Settings of Leisure as Sources of Inactivity: Explaining Growth Disparities in the U.S. Since 1965

***GENDER and URBAN SPACE

Tuesday, August 16, 12:30-2:10 PM
Presider: Daphne Spain, University of Virginia
Discussant: Judith DeSena, St. Johns University
Participants:
Mary Byrnes, Wayne State University. Gender and Space: A Quantitative Study

of Older Urban Women and Mental Health.

Ryan Centner, University of California, Berkeley. Fear, Danger, Men:
Violences of Gender and Development in a City in Crisis.

Lynda Laughlin, Temple University. Working Mothers and Child Care Decisions
in Urban Neighborhoods.

Flora Matheson, University of Toronto. Urban Neighborhoods, Stress, Gender, and Depression:
A Factorial Ecology.

***2005 CUSS ROUNDTABLES

Monday, August 15, 10:30 AM-12:10 PM

*Planning and Design Issues

Moderator: Lily Hofman, CUNY

A Case Study in Planned Growth: An Evaluation of a Proposed Elgin IL Annexation and
Developments in the Context of Smart Growth and New Urbanism.

Charles Cappell, Northern Illinois University

World Cities and Global Architecture Firms: A Network Approach

Xuefei Ren, University of Chicago

Educating Architects and the Implications for Buildings, Cities, and Civic Engagement

Carla Corroto, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater

Direct Impacts of Casinos and Externalities on Illinois and Northwestern Indiana Communities

Eric Peterson, PB Consult, and Kim Hunt, KLH Consulting Services

*Downtown Redevelopment

Moderator: Caroline Lee, UCSD

The Uneven Geography of Downtown Redevelopment: Sources, Processes, and Consequences of
Sports Stadium Building

Timothy Collins, Arizona State University

Lessons Learned for Rebuilding Lower Manhattan: W.E.B. DuBois and the Chicago School
Pragmatists

David Woods, Fordham University

The Socialization of Temptown: Sculpting Consent in the Furniture Capital of the World

John Joe Schlichtman, NYU

Where the Action is: How Physical Structure Affects the Use of Small Public Spaces

Colin Jerolmack, CUNY

*Affluent Neighborhoods and Segregation

Moderator: Ray Hutchinson, University of Wisconsin, Green Bay

Suburban Growth and the Spatial Segregation of the Affluent in the United States, 1980-2000

Rachel E. Dwyer, Ohio State

Behind the Golden Door: Affluent Neighborhoods in Major Metropolitan Areas, 1990-2000

Matthew Marley, Penn State

*Social Networks and Poverty

Moderator: Jennifer Stoloff, HUD

Search Mismatch: An Exploratory Analysis of Job Search Strategies Among Low-income Black
Women

Kristin Turney, University of Pennsylvania
Friends, Jobs, and Moving to Opportunity
Susan Clampet-Lundquist, Princeton University, and Rebecca Kissane, Lafayette College
Urban Poverty, Household Strategies, and Coping with Urban Life in Dhaka City, Bangladesh
Shahadat Hossain, University of New South Wales

*Space, Networks, and Behavior

Moderator: Lindsay Taggart Rutherford, University of Pennsylvania
Living in a Bubble: Social Control and Protection of Suburban Teenagers Through Spatial
Organization
Yuki Kato, UC Irvine
Cutting Known Social Capital: The Key to Success for Ex-Inmates
Jodie M. Dewey, Concordia University

*Migration, Mobility, and Areal Impacts Moderator: Elena Vesselinov, University of South
Carolina

Segregation and Residential Mobility in a Southern City, 1900-1930
Regina Bures, University of Florida
Prosperity, Immigration, and Neighborhood Change in Silicon Valley, 1990-2000
Vern Baxter, University of New Orleans
Explaining Churn: Mass Society, Social Capital, and Community Turbulence
Delores Forbes-Edelen, University of Central Florida

*Neighborhood Diversity and Discrimination

Moderator: Jeffrey Timberlake, University of Cincinnati
The New Patterns of Neighborhood Diversity and Racial Segregation in the American
Metropolis
Juan Onesimo Sandoval, Northwestern University
Cybersegregation: Is Neil Kelly a More Desirable Tenant than Tyrone Jackson or Jorge
Rodriguez?
Samantha Friedman, Northeastern University, and Gregory Squires, George Washington
University

*Urban Collective Resistance

Moderator: Leslie Martin, Boise State University
Social Capital and Ordinary Social Movement in Urban China: A Case Study of Community
Movement in Shanghai
Shi Fayong, National University of Singapore
We're Here and We're Not Leaving: The Role of Cultural-Relevant Framing in Anti-
Gentrification Movements
June Gin, University of Michigan

*Gentrification and Neighborhood Development

Moderator: Lance Freeman, Columbia University
Gentrification and Community
Daniel Monroe Sullivan, Portland State University
Making Sense and Marking Ground: Black and White Police Officers as Spatial Entrepreneurs
David Shalliol, University of Chicago

*Visions of the Larger Community Moderator: Suzanne Maurer, Kutztown State University
Rural Mountain Natives and In-Migrants and the 'Cultural Divide
Kathleen Brennan and Christopher Cooper, Western Carolina University
Of Place and Purpose: Competing Visions of Community in the Nonprofit Sector
Emily Barman, Boston University

*Globalization and World Cities
Moderator: Heather Hofmeister, Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Hamburg
World Cities and National Urban System in China
Xiulian Ma, University of Utah
From Deindustrialization to Global Economic Integration: How Rust Belt Cities Adapt to the
New Economy
George Hobor, University of Arizona
The Impact of Globalization on Local Communities
Robyn Bateman Driscoll and Larry Lyon, Baylor University

*Community Case Studies
Moderator: Maggie Kusenbach, University of South Florida
Volunteer Government
Albert Hunter, Northwestern University
Helping the Homeless for Better or Worse: Political Implications of Social Service
John C. Kilburn, Jr., Texas A&M International University
Coordinating Action and Reproducing Segregation in a Heterogeneous Neighborhood
Jolyon Ticer-Wurr, University of Chicago
Is Privatization in Welfare Provision Really that New? A Case Study of Homeless and Relief
Services in New York City: 1920s and 1990s
Deirdre Oakley, Northern Illinois University

*Place Identity and Neighborhood Perceptions
Moderator: Richard Lloyd, Vanderbilt University
Bridging the Divide: Modeling the Material and Ideational Elements of Place
Christopher D. Campbell, University of Washington
Food and Nostalgia in Singapore Night Markets
Lisa Lim, National University of Singapore
Changes in Prestige Perception of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa Neighborhoods: 1983-1998
Yona Ginsberg and Tzipi Hornik, Bar-Ilan University

FEATURE ARTICLES

INTRODUCTION: Three Articles About Philadelphia
Anne B. Shlay, Chair Elect
Temple University

This issue of the newsletter highlights Philadelphia, the location of the 2005 ASA annual meetings, with three articles by graduate students at Temple University in a seminar with me on

urban sociological theory. The course focused on various theories concerned with spatial development and inequality to learn how to analyze contemporary urban issues from a strong theoretical base. The resulting “applied theory projects” dealt with three important Philadelphia issues that are spatial at their core: 1) the impending downtown move of the world famous Barnes Foundation of impressionist art; 2) the funding crisis associated with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (Philadelphia’s public regional public transit system), and 3) Philadelphia’s recent policy effort around housing abandonment, blight and neighborhood revitalization—the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. We hope that these vignettes inspire you to look further at Philadelphia’s urban political economy and to discover what an interesting space this place is.

MOVING THE BARNES FOUNDATION: Philadelphia’s Downtown Growth Agenda
Elisa Bernd, Melody Boyd, Jason Martin and Dan Ohlemiller
Temple University

Sharon Zukin argues that “Every building, street, and neighborhood is simultaneously a culture space and a part of a matrix of power” (Zukin 2002: 347). In Philadelphia, the impending move of the Barnes Foundation museum from its suburban home to downtown Center City is proving to be a rich opportunity for examining the relationship between culture, space, and power.

The Barnes Foundation is the legacy of Dr. Albert C. Barnes who, upon inventing a lucrative anti-septic in the early 1900s, turned his attention to collecting art. He amassed what is considered one of the most important collections of modern art, particularly the art of the now popular impressionists. The number of paintings by Cézanne, Matisse, Degas and Renoir alone are staggering.

Long after Dr. Barnes’s premature and accidental death, it was discovered that his will stipulated that his collection remain in Lower Merion, its suburban home. It would not, he also stipulated, be watched over by elites (the typical watchdogs of fine arts) but be managed by trustees coming from a historically Black public university: Lincoln University. He also placed considerable limitations on how the collection could be viewed with the goal of preserving the collection’s educative function.

This will, however, was challenged in court. As a result of this court battle over the Barnes Foundation’s imminent financial insolvency, the eccentric Barnes collection of Impressionist art will be moved from its traditional suburban home to a new location on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Center City Philadelphia.

This development raises a number of questions: In what ways do the actors behind the Barnes move represent a coalition of power and interest? Whose interests are treated as being of utmost importance here? What ramifications does the move have for all residents of the city of Philadelphia, not just corporate interest? And how does the move contribute to the naturalization of downtown development? Political economy and growth machine theory should prove useful in exploring these questions.

The coalition that has worked to move the Barnes to Center City is first and foremost composed of the Barnes board of directors and the foundations that pledged money to the Barnes on the condition that it move to Philadelphia—the Pew, Lenfest, and Annenberg. Other members of this coalition include Mayor John Street and other local elected politicians (and also Governor Ed Rendell), the Fairmount Park Commission, the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, and the local media. Our preliminary research indicates that these actors are connected in various ways—the Lenfest Foundation produced the current chair of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA), and the Pew Trust is one of the PMA's biggest donors. New Barnes trustee Joseph Neubauer is chairman of the Aramark Corporation, which is headquartered in Philadelphia and provides food services for other auxiliary growth machine components such as stadiums and universities. Another new Barnes trustee, Aileen Kennedy Roberts, is married to the CEO of Comcast Corporation. Comcast, currently headquartered at 15th and Market Street in Center City, owns both the 76ers and the Flyers (*Columbia Journalism Review* “Who Owns What”). Further research should more thoroughly map out the interlocking directorates behind the Barnes move.

Philadelphia's investment in the Barnes move comes at a time when the city is facing record budget cuts, as well as an ongoing financial crisis in its public transportation system. The Barnes relocation is not simply about building a new museum; it means building up a “package” that will sell Philadelphia (locally and globally) as a cultural theme park, as our own Paris, or London, or Tokyo, with the implication of generating a profit to all of the parties involved. Certainly, this relocation project will enhance profits for close-by hotels (e.g., the Four Seasons) and other business spaces, including the nearby Cira Center, which will soon be home to Comcast headquarters.

However, this development is what David Harvey long ago called “central business district imperialism” where benefits are distributed unevenly by design (Harvey 1973: 79). In the context of the Barnes move, the power players who promoted the move will gain a lot from the Barnes move, but others in the city lose out when resources are allocated for these downtown development projects instead of being allotted to other areas of greater need. Despite the impressive range of media coverage of the Barnes saga, there has been little discussion about the displacement of the Youth Study Center (a juvenile prison which is in the proposed location of the Barnes on the Parkway) to a low-income Black neighborhood in West Philadelphia, nor is there recognition of the needs of other parts of the city for development and resources.

Actual organized resistance to the move has been relatively minimal. Those objecting to the Barnes leaving Lower Merion include some local residents, whose resistance only went so far as a lawn sign campaign, as well as several of the Barnes art students whose oppositions seems to stem from a desire to preserve the Barnes's educational mission as laid out in Dr Barnes's indenture. The art students have posed perhaps the greatest challenge to the move, in the form of an appeal that, according Barnes chairman Bernard Watson and recent news coverage, was believed to jeopardize the long-term survival of the Foundation.

Yet, this appeal does not represent a concerted effort by those who stand to lose out by the move. The Barnes represents another item on a pro-growth agenda that arguably increases inequality in the guise of being good for everyone. Notes Harvey Molotch,

The development system bleeds into all realms of urban life. If we want to know why U.S. cities do so little for their poor, or to enhance the daily round of single moms, we need to understand what is instead filling the urban action space. Increasingly, both in the United States and to a degree in Europe, policies must justify themselves in terms of the growth agenda. (Molotch 1999: 259)

Thus, the emphasis on downtown development of cities serves to redirect action, resources and funding that could be allocated to bolstering social services to those in need, enhancing education, improving neighborhoods, etc. This maintains and even exacerbates inequality and preserves the status quo. The relocation of the Barnes museum represents the latest development in this pattern—the manipulation of cultural space by the powerful at the expense of the rest of us.

Work Cited

Harvey, David. 1973. *Social Justice and the City*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Zukin, Sharon. 2002. “What’s Space Got to Do With It.?” *City and Community* 1(4): 345-348.

CRISIS, CONTRADICTION and CONUNDRUM: Public Transportation in Philadelphia
Tina Armando, Catherine Bartoli, Jeffrey Carrol, Lisa Kufs, and Karen Smiley-Robinson
Temple University

Picture this: you’ve held two part-time jobs paying minimum wage for three years. Finally, you have the chance to take a job at \$13 an hour with benefits. But like over 50% of new positions being created in the Philadelphia region, this job is not in the city, but in the suburbs. You don’t have a car, and because you have been only making minimum wage to support yourself and your two children, you have no savings. You’ll have to use SEPTA, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.

From your home in northwest section of the city to the new job in the western suburb of Norristown is 18 miles. However, you must take three buses and a light rail to Norristown Transportation Station. From there, you can walk to work. Leaving at 6:00 AM, you can just make to work by 8:15 AM. It’s the cheapest route at \$18.75 for a weekly pass plus \$0.50 each way for the zone fares. Your other option, two buses and the regional rail, is quicker but much more expensive at \$34 per week. Most importantly, it’s less travel time, giving you a half hour at each end of the day. You can get home a little earlier, so you won’t spend as much for extended daycare services. In the end, you earn virtually the same take home pay, but you have benefits.

Everyday similar choices are made by low-wage Philadelphians. SEPTA is intimately tied to the economic lives of the low-income population of Philadelphia. As urban sprawl and city decentralization restructure the American city, low-income Philadelphians find new employment opportunities dispersed across the region. Like many major cities, the historical processes of segregation and suburbanization have created large swatches of the urban terrains populated by the least economically stable social groups. These groups suffer the most as sprawl and decentralization move companies out of the confines of the city. In this way, SEPTA is a critical lifeline to maintaining employment.

This summer, at the ASA conference in Philadelphia, sociologists will gather from all parts of the country to discuss issues and institutions that impact the lives of urban-dwelling populations. Topics of urban debate may include such things as inequality, housing segregation, and urban revitalization, but no analysis of Philadelphia would be complete without an understanding of the region's system of public transportation, and its impact on the urban dweller.

Despite the evolution of the Philadelphia region from a mono-centric city reminiscent of those described by the Chicago school into its current Postmodern, multi-centric state, SEPTA's core transportation routes mainly provide service in and out of the urban center. This has become increasingly less convenient as suburbs have proliferated, and ridership has dropped. The uneven spatial distribution of job growth and available low-income housing in the Philadelphia area also magnifies the impact of SEPTA's structural shortcomings.

New Urban Sociology has provided us with a paradigm of worker-owner relations that provides insight into the role of public transportation in the urban economy. This centers on the notion that corporations need their labor force to sufficiently replicate itself each day. This replication requires that the labor force must be able to return home, rest, eat, shower and come to work the next morning on time. Corporations benefit most in areas where this daily workforce replenishment is cheap—that way they do not have to pay labor as much. Since labor is the biggest area where a corporation can save money, a cheap labor force is vital to the profitability of corporations.

Philadelphia corporations are no different. They benefit from SEPTA, since they do not have to pay their labor enough to own and operate the cars, which would otherwise be required for workforce replication. Workers then pay fares to ride SEPTA out of their own pockets, and as if that were not enough, funding for SEPTA also comes out of taxes, which are also paid by workers. In this way, the current public transportation system works to transfer funds from the hands of workers into the profit margins of corporations.

Postmodern urban sociology has also pointed out the polarization and dualities between rich and poor in the urban environment. Despite the fact that government funding for roads and bridges *far* exceeds that spent on public transit, funding for public transit is still portrayed as an objectionably large taxpayer expense. Content analysis of the media coverage of SEPTA's funding crises has revealed a series of noticeable dualities similar to the ones discussed by theorists. There is an antagonistic relationship between the wealthier, more rural, car-driving population, who resent their tax dollars going to public transit from which they do not think they benefit, and urban public transit users who need for public transportation and suffer the ill effects such as the loss of business to previously vital neighborhoods when they are cut off from public transit. This debate is also framed in terms of a polarization between political parties (Republican and Democrat) or Pennsylvania regions (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh vs. the middle of the state).

SEPTA's history parallels the combined history of deindustrialization, suburbanization, segregation, and the ideological change from the welfare state to neoliberalism. These processes and the ideologies underlining them have combined to create an environment where SEPTA cannot possibly flourish. SEPTA has experienced repeated financial difficulties since it took over from existing private transportation corporations in 1968. Chartered to be funded by

revenues plus state and federal grants, SEPTA's declining ridership and reduction in federal grants create cycles of "crisis." Combined with the decentralization of employment, this leaves low-income Philadelphians one strike, one fare hike, and one reduction of a needed bus or train route from unemployment. These Philadelphians, like SEPTA, are in continual crisis.

FOR WHOM TRANSFORMATION TOLLS? Philadelphia's Neighborhood Revitalization Policy

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During his time as mayor, Ed Rendell, now governor of Pennsylvania, committed significant Philadelphia funds to the development of its downtown areas. Rendell's commitment to downtown development was so obvious that a commonly heard slogan during his spin as mayor was "From Pine to Vine, River to River," indicating the areas of Philadelphia (i.e. downtown) that Rendell would most like to see developed during his political tenure in the city. Achievements like the new Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts and a revitalization of the area known as the "Avenue of the Arts" are a testament to this aspect of Rendell's political platform during his terms as mayor.

In contrast to Rendell's advocacy of downtown development, current mayor John F. Street's administration has turned attention to the revitalization of neighborhoods all over Philadelphia, from North Philadelphia to Strawberry Mansion to Mantua. Like many U.S. cities, Philadelphia suffers from the problems of housing abandonment and neighborhood decay. Population loss and the exodus of the industrial sector has pockmarked the city with abandoned buildings, dilapidated and forgotten.

In April 2001, Mayor John F. Street announced the creation of a new initiative that would work to eradicate urban blight and create development opportunities in Philadelphia neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) is a five-year plan that primarily focuses on assembling large tracts of land through the demolition of abandoned buildings and land clearance. Mayor Street hopes that by making tracts of land available in some of Philadelphia's poorest neighborhoods, private investors will choose to invest in these areas and build unsubsidized housing. By revitalizing Philadelphia's neighborhoods, Mayor Street expects to attract residents and businesses back to Philadelphia.

The main source of funding for NTI is Government Purpose Bonds, in this case, municipal bonds. The tax-exempt municipal bonds account for \$275 million in funding for NTI. About three-quarters of the NTI budget is reserved for the demolition of large vacant buildings, the demolition of dangerous housing, and land assembly for new development. The remaining money is dedicated to property stabilization, rehabilitation, and homeowners' assistance.

In early 2005, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported an update on NTI's progress. As of June 30, 2004, 5,507 houses and apartments have been built or renovated (original goal: 3,500). In addition, 6,839 houses and apartments have been built or started in large-scale housing developments (original goal: 2,000). The number of demolition projects has also increased, with 6,885 buildings demolished or under contract to be demolished (original goal: 8,000-10,000).

Finally, the goal for housing preservation investments has also been exceeded, with 13,962 homeowners having received low-interest loans or grants to repair their homes (original goal: 4,500) (Twyman 2005, B01).

The demolition of vacant housing and buildings has taken place throughout the city. However, a visitor to Philadelphia is unlikely to notice these changes. What visitors are likely to see are new housing developments in some of the city's poorest neighborhoods. For instance, on a visit to Temple University, one is likely to pass the Cecil B. Moore housing development, located near Girard Avenue. With their appealing front lawns and driveways, the townhouses in this development are a stark contrast to the dilapidated housing in the surrounding North Philadelphia neighborhood. As part of the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, Mayor Street has overseen the creation of six new housing developments in areas in need of revitalization. These new housing developments are designed to accommodate individuals and families of varying income levels.

Despite its noteworthy goal of revitalizing neighborhoods, many in Philadelphia have expressed concerns about the program. First, some are wary of NTI because its focus on demolition and land clearance is reminiscent of the urban renewal programs of the 1970s that displaced many poor and working class residents in favor of downtown development. Second, NTI also stirs controversy, as it has required that Philadelphia exercise eminent domain. Eminent domain is the government seizure of private property for public benefit. In addition to the hardships that accompany displacement, some residents have complained that they were provided inadequate notice that the city was seizing their property. However, the city believes it has used its eminent domain power judiciously. According to *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, of the 5,334 properties approved for condemnation as of June 2003, less than 5 percent, or 261 properties, were legally occupied.

Third, preservationists worry that historic housing is endangered by the city's plans for demolishing abandoned homes. Preservation advocates are concerned about the way in which buildings are assessed for their historical value. Since the inception of NTI, this assessment is the responsibility of the local government. Preservationists argue that the process of evaluating the historical worthiness of a structure is a professionalized and artful task that cannot be assumed by a government employee untrained in this process. Instead of thoroughly assessing the historical value of buildings, preservationists charge that NTI evaluators are forsaking protocol so that an expedient evaluation can be rendered and land can be cleared (Young 2003).

Finally, by focusing on demolition and land assembly, the Street administration has prioritized the growth of the city. NTI's primary goal is to increase the residential and business population. Thus, instead of dedicating more funds to rehabilitation programs that would aid *current* city residents, Mayor Street has favored a program that is designed to stimulate new residential construction to attract new residents. While NTI does include some neighborhood rehabilitation and stabilization programs, these programs were not a feature of the initiative at its inception; these programs were added later. In their piece on the role one community organization played in the development process of NTI, Shlay and Whitman (forthcoming) describe how community activism resulted in the inclusion of funds for neighborhood stabilization, money that was not initially set aside for such purposes.

The final outcome of Philadelphia's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative remains to be seen. While advocates of NTI's programs believe that it will result in positive returns for both the city and its residents, clearly there are some who believe that NTI's consequences will not be as beneficial. Over the next few years, the city of Philadelphia can try to assess the success of NTI by employing sociologists to investigate the progress (or lack thereof) of NTI's many programs. Guided urban theoretical paradigms like political economy and the growth machine thesis, urban sociologists are in a position to aid Philadelphia by providing research that demonstrates whether or not the city has, in fact, been revitalized through NTI.

Works Cited

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MEMBERS' NEWS

***Vision for a Place of Peace: Jerusalem 2050

On April 8-9, more than 30 urban scholars, activists, and practitioners convened at MIT to address the hard questions and to offer visions of a peaceful, democratic, harmonious, and prosperous Jerusalem in the year 2050. Participants included Sari Nusseibeh, president of Al-Quds University; Naomi Chazan, former deputy speaker of the Knesset; Meron Benvenisti, former deputy mayor of Jerusalem; Naseer Aruri, professor emeritus from the University of Massachusetts; Ariella Azoulay, filmmaker and writer; and Arie Arnon, economist from Ben Gurion University, among others. Commentators included Manuel Castells, Richard Sennett, Arjun Appadurai, and Christine Boyer. The conference was held in conjunction with the JERUSALEM 2050 project, an initiative headed by MIT Department of Urban Studies faculty member Diane Davis, and inspired by the question "What would it take to make Jerusalem -- a city claimed by two nations and central to three religions -- 'merely' a city, a place of difference and diversity in which contending ideas and citizenries can co-exist in benign yet creative ways?" The meeting was the first in a series of steps and collaborative workshops aimed at proposing concrete plans to redesign the city by mid-century, and commencing with a major initiative to host a juried international Vision Competition to build a "city of peace" in this most symbolically important place.

JERUSALEM 2050 is jointly sponsored by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in the School of Architecture, and the Center for International Studies in the School of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts at MIT. For more information contact: dedavis@mit.edu.

NEW BOOKS by SECTION MEMBERS

***CITIES, CHANGE and CONFLICT: A Political Economy of Urban Life, 3rd ed. Nancy Kleniewski . Stamford, CT: Wadsworth, 2005.

Cities, Change, and Conflict: A Political Economy of Urban Life, 3rd edition, by Nancy Kleniewski, is an undergraduate urban sociology text published by Wadsworth Group. Although it emphasizes the political economy approach to cities, it also describes and applies the human ecology approach to a number of topics. This text integrates theory, research, and policy applications throughout to help students see the relevance of urban research to concrete problems and issues. It contextualizes questions of race, class, and gender by including chapters on Immigration and the City, African Americans and the City, Women and the City, and Social Class and Neighborhoods. It addresses historical and global trends by including chapters on Cities in World History, Urban Development in the United States, Cities in Europe, and Cities in the Third World. The new edition includes thoroughly revised chapters on the Urban Economy, Local Government and Finances, and Federal Urban Policy. The book, which will be available in August, 2005, will have a companion web site for student and instructor use.

***CITIES and SOCIETY. Nancy Kleniewski. New York: Blackwell, 2005.

Cities and Society, edited by Nancy Kleniewski and published by Blackwell Publishing, is a compilation of 20 contemporary readings in urban sociology. The readings, including journal articles and book chapters, cover the period since 1976 but heavily emphasize work published since 1990. The chapters are grouped into four topic areas: *recent theoretical perspectives on cities and society*, *globalization and its impact on cities*, *the changing urban economy*, and *urban policy choices*. Many of the most prominent scholars in the field of urban studies are represented, including Harvey Molotch, John Logan, Todd Swanstrom, Daphne Spain, Michael Dear, Mike Savage, Alan Warde, Saskia Sassen, Jan Lin, Alan Gilbert, Josef Gugler, Roger Waldinger, Edna Bonacich, Richard Appelbaum, Jennifer Wolch, Susan Fainstein, Sharon Zukin, John Urry, Richard Lloyd, Paul Jargowsky, Douglas Massey, Nancy Denton, Mike Davis, Peter Dreier, John Mollenkopf, Thad Williamson, David Imbroscio, and Gar Alperowitz. Because the volume is intended to be used as a text in an undergraduate or graduate course, the articles have been edited for readability and relevance to a student audience, and the editor has provided an introductory overview.

*** THE END of the HAMPTONS: Scenes from the Class Struggle in America's Paradise. Corey Dolgon. New York: New York University Press, 2005.

In this absorbing account of New York's famous vacation playground, Corey Dolgon goes beyond the celebrity tales of P. Diddy, Lizzie Grubman, Calvin Klein, and their polo games to tell us the story of this complex and contentious land. Dolgon argues that Long Island's East End has a long and tortured past, rife with class struggle between the haves and the have-nots. This turmoil is a direct result of the Hamptons' unique founding and history. As wave after wave of immigrants have settled on the island, a pattern of anxiety and exclusion has risen to the surface, compelling each new group of land owners to spurn the incoming group of potential residents. From the displacement of Native Americans by the Puritans to the first wave of Manhattan elites who built the Summer Colony, to the current infusion of telecommuting Manhattanites who now want to live there year-round, the story of the Hamptons is a vicious cycle of supposed paradise lost.

*** GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS for the SOCIAL Sciences: Investigating Space and Place. Steven J. Steinberg and Sheila L. Steinberg. Santa Monica: Sage, 2005.

This book takes a cutting-edge approach to integrating spatial concepts into the social sciences. It is written for both the practitioner and the academic. Specifically, it focuses upon the incorporation of a technology called GIS, (Geographic Information Systems) with social science analysis. GIS allows the user to broaden the scope of comparisons, contrasts, and most importantly, the inclusion of space and place into the study of social issues. The integration of spatial concepts into social science research is not new; however the use of GIS provides a means to effectively incorporate space and place in the study of social issues. GIS simultaneously enhances and extends these analysis techniques into new, innovative realms within the social sciences. We examine the important role that geographic context plays in the social sciences. This book is also unique and useful to people who desire to integrate GIS with qualitative research approaches. Anyone who is interested in the application of GIS to social science fields such as public health, anthropology, geography, sociology, planning, political science, and many others, will benefit from reading this book.

***HOW PATRIOTIC is the PATRIOT ACT?: Freedom Versus Security in the Age of Terrorism. Amitai Etzioni. London: Routledge, 2004.

In this new book, "blessed" by both Nadine Strossen of the ACLU and John Ashcroft's former assistant attorney general. Viet Dinh, a communitarian way of thinking is applied to one of the hottest topics of the day. Dr. Amitai Etzioni argues that when it comes to national security we face two profound commitments: protecting our homeland and safeguarding our rights. Demonstrating that extremism in the defense of either security or liberty is not a virtue, the book charts a middle course between those who are committed to the preservation of our liberties but blind to the needs of public security and those who are willing to sacrifice our cherished freedoms for the sake of preventing terrorism. For more info, visit: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ccps/patriot.html> .

***MEXICAN NEW YORK: Transnational Worlds of New Immigrants. Robert Courtney Smith. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

The book is a seventeen year ethnography of transnational life and assimilation of Mexican immigrants in New York City and rural Puebla. It analyzes on local level political, gender and life course processes, including the renegotiation of practices of community membership, adolescence and gender.

***NEW STATE SPACES: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood. Neil Brenner. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2005.

In this synthetic, interdisciplinary work, Neil Brenner develops a new interpretation of the transformation of statehood under contemporary globalizing capitalism. Whereas most analysts of the emergent, post-Westphalian world order have focused on supranational and national institutional realignments, 'New State Spaces' shows that strategic subnational spaces, such as

cities and city-regions, represent essential arenas in which states are being transformed. Brenner traces the transformation of urban governance in western Europe during the last four decades and, on this basis, argues that inherited geographies of state power are being fundamentally rescaled. Through a combination of theory construction, historical analysis and cross-national case studies of urban policy change, 'New State Spaces' provides an innovative analysis of the new formations of state power that are currently emerging.

***THE POLITICS of PLACE: Contentious Urban Redevelopment in Pittsburgh. Gregory J. Crowley. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005

In urban America, large-scale redevelopment is a frequent news item. Many proposals for such redevelopment are challenged—sometimes successfully, and other times to no avail. *The Politics of Place* considers the reasons for these outcomes by examining five cases of contentious redevelopment in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, between 1949 and 2000. In four of these cases, the challengers to redevelopment failed to create the conditions necessary for strong democratic participation. In the fifth case—the proposed reconstruction of Pittsburgh’s downtown retail district (1997–2000)—challengers succeeded, and Crowley describes the crucial role of independent nonprofit organizations in bringing about this result. At the heart of Crowley’s discussion are questions central to any urban redevelopment debate: Who participates in urban redevelopment, what motivates them to do so, and what structures in the political process open or close a democratic dialogue among the stakeholders? Through his astute analysis, Crowley answers these questions and posits a framework through which to view future contention in urban redevelopment.

NEW DISSERTATIONS by SECTION MEMBERS

***PLAYING WITH TRADITION: Fenway Park and Urban Culture. Michael Ian Borer, Boston University, 2006.

The role that places like Fenway Park play in the social life of a city is the subject of this dissertation. While exploring the importance of this iconic ballpark, the project addresses issues relevant to ongoing debates about American civic culture and the persistence of local sentiment within cities. The present situation concerning the removal or renovation of Fenway Park, the home playing grounds of the Boston Red Sox and the oldest major league ballpark in operation (built in 1912), provides a valuable empirical case for investigating the use of leisure and recreation facilities in urban areas as places for the practice of community and civic culture. Data were obtained through the following qualitative field research methods: participant observation, archival research, and intensive interviewing. I interviewed fans and non-fans, persons who work in and around the ballpark including current and former Red Sox players and personnel, and the persons who ultimately have to decide what to do with the park and the team (e.g., Red Sox owners and executives, city officials and the Boston Redevelopment Agency). Uncovering and analyzing the ways that people in and outside of Boston use the ballpark and respond to the debate about its future demonstrates the multiple approaches that persons take toward the maintenance and reconstruction of a city’s cultural beliefs and practices.
