



Urban Quality of Life at Risk

German British Conference

Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Faculty 1
Architecture • Civil Engineering • Geomatics

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Programme

10.30 | REGISTRATION AND COFFEE

11.00 | WELCOME AND OPENING

11:10 | SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CITY DEVELOPMENT

■ **The Role of housing for the well-being of low-income households** Becky Tunstall – Director, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York

■ **Same, same, but different: Gentrification and Public Policy in Berlin and London** Matthias Bernt – IRS Erkner

■ **Minimum city: Re-assessing London's success, social justice and the impacts of the super-rich** Rowland Atkinson – Chair in Inclusive Societies. University of Sheffield

12:40 | LUNCH BREAK

13.40 Uhr | INFRASTRUCTURE AND QUALITY OF LIFE

■ **Social Exclusion and Mobility** Karen Lucas – University of Leeds, Social Exclusion Unit

■ **Transport infrastructure and its influences on urban life** Maik Hömke – Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

■ **Living in the Inner City – Strategies to cope with its Specific Qualities, Challenges and Risks** Marcus Menzl, HafenCity, Hamburg

15.10 Uhr | COFFEE BREAK

15:40 | SPECIFIC HOUSING CONDITIONS

■ **Living in large scale housing estates – perception, problems, quality of life** Maren Harnack – Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

■ **Urban vulnerability and asylum seekers** Simon Parker – Senior Lecturer in Politics; Director of the Centre for Urban Research (CURB) at the University of York

■ **Co-housing: utopia (lost)?** Annette Spellerberg – University of Kaiserslautern

17:10 | FINAL DISCUSSION

URBAN QUALITY OF LIFE AT RISK

Annette Spellerberg, University of Kaiserslautern

Maren Harnack, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

Urban quality of life is currently conceptualized in principally economic terms. As the decline in manufacturing activities, the rise of the service and knowledge economy, the growing importance of accessibility and globalizing processes continue to reconfigure the economic competition between cities, quality of life enters the discourse primarily as a means to attract high-skilled workers and improve the city's economic prospects. Local governments increasingly seek partnerships with local and foreign capital, reorganizing institutions and tasks to attract capital, including the "selling of place," strengthening place promotion and marketing efforts. The rhetoric clearly welcomes wealthy, creative, high-skilled people, disadvantaged and low skilled groups receive less attention in the making of places. Especially with respect to inner city areas, high quality of life is promoted as spaces for 'clean' and convenient consumption with positive atmospheres and shiny images.

Yet, a plethora of theoretical engagements with urban everyday life reminds us that, while variety of jobs, quality of public spaces, range of shops and services, cultural facilities and public transport are important place characteristics, more subjective aspects such as safe neighbourhoods, well-being, community prospects, social cohesion, happiness, satisfaction and social and spatial justice are equally crucial determinants of urban quality of life. These elements of urban quality of life – and how they are experienced by diverse formations of urban inhabitants – seem to be absent from, if not at odds with, the dominant discourse in rankings, policy and practice. Urban life, social cohesion and complexity are at risk in the dynamics of modernization and adaptation strategies of cities. This conference will focus on tracking urban quality of life at risk. Gentrification, the occupation of inner-city districts by hyper-rich people, segregation and displacement of lower and middle classes can be observed as a consequence of these strategies.

- Which aspects of quality of life are affected by which trajectories of cities?
- What does a stronger segregation mean for quality of life for different population groups?
- How satisfied are people with their living conditions in different parts of the city?
- When and why do people move into or out of cities?
- In which way is personal quality of life affected by place-based images and imaginations of quality of life within cities?
- Which aspects can be observed as social innovations to improve quality of life?

For example, housing projects with new architectural patterns, community space and multi-generational living can be regarded as a coping strategy for housing, job and family related risks and new quarters for healthy environments and good quality of life. The extent of social stratification is limited and narrowed in certain city spaces, which may have a positive as well as negative impact on subjective well-being.

We do not know much about the quality of life in globalized spaces, or about transnational areas within city life, (asylum seekers and refugees, illegal inhabitants). Neighbourhoods are perceived and evaluated according to different criteria (diversity, neutral contacts, friendliness, openness), but neighborly help as a substitute for municipally provided social services is mostly discussed with a critical stance. Regarding risk, infrastructure is included in research on urban quality of life. Cities have to cope with worn-out infrastructure (water, sewerage, public transport) that has to be renewed and technically upgraded as well as with rising temperatures and water levels. Typically, the poorer strata of the population are more affected by pollution, waste, noise, crime, uncleanness and climate change than more affluent population groups. Hence we want to discuss, whether more inclusive forms of quality of life can be achieved under current economic and political conditions.



THE ROLE OF HOUSING FOR THE WELL-BEING OF LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Becky Tunstall

Director, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York

The presentation focuses on housing affordability and how low income families cope with high housing costs. It is well known that soaring house prices and rents, coupled with stagnant income growth in recent years, mean that paying for housing poses an increasing challenge to many ordinary families. In this context, a growing body of research has benchmarked housing affordability for typical households in different parts of the country. But there is no defined measure of housing affordability and little consensus on what an affordability threshold looks like across tenures and geographies. The author is seeking to understand affordability more generally by framing the debate in the context of what people actually spend on housing, and how this varies geographically, by household characteristics and by housing type. Analysis of national survey data are presented that details where and for whom housing costs bite, and the factors that drive affordability issues. From this analysis, it is hoped to start a debate on how the many low income families looking to purchase or rent today cope with the cost of housing, and the choices and compromises they are faced with.



Becky Tunstall has wide-ranging research interests and expertise across housing studies, social policy, and applied social research. Her principal areas of work has been social housing, neighbourhoods, and inequality. She is particularly interested in longitudinal studies of places, housing, people and the interactions between them. In addition, she has a long-standing interests in public participation in decision-making and service decentralisation. She has researched, published and established expertise in particular on social housing management, tenant participation, segregation and mixed communities, neighbourhood regeneration, riots, housing design and US-UK urban and housing comparison.



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Presentation

SAME, SAME, BUT DIFFERENT

Gentrification and Public Policy in Berlin and London

Matthias Bernt

IRS Erkner

Over the last years, an increasing number of scholarly contributions have become interested in the interrelation of gentrification and public policies. Thereby, the idea that public policies today have become a main driver of gentrification has become a somewhat commonly understood fact.

This talk takes issue with this view. It explores the changing interrelation of gentrification and public policy in the two classical cases of Prenzlauer Berg (Berlin) and Barnsbury (London) and argues that while demise in the face of market forces is clearly visible here, the scope of relations between public policies and gentrification is much wider and more complex. The reason for this is the double-character of housing as a commodity and a social right which leads to highly unstable and contradictory regeneration policies.

Against this background I call for more awareness to varying national and local policy contexts in gentrification research. I argue that what is widely coined as “gentrification” is in fact an umbrella term for fairly disparate socio-spatial formations which are marked by different policies and state structures and result in different dynamics of regeneration and population change.



Matthias Bernt has been trained as a political scientist and works as a senior researcher at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning in Erkner. Bernt works on the broad field of interrelations between urban development and urban governance, with a strong focus on urban shrinkage and on gentrification. He has extensively published on the two issues both in national and international publications. Since November 2013 Bernt is a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.



MINIMUM CITY

Re-assessing London's success, social justice and the impacts of the super-rich

Rowland Atkinson

Chair in Inclusive Societies, Department of Town and Regional Planning/Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Sheffield

An estimated seventy billionaires and the bulk of the UK's 13.7 million High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) live within Greater London. In this paper we look at the spatial distribution of the wealthy in London and consider how the pronounced growth of these groups (made-up of both international and indigenous households) has affected neighbourhood life, urban politics and life more generally in what we have described elsewhere as a capital among capital cities.

Such pronounced wealth condensation feeds further investment looking to make gains, either speculating on safe investments in the built environment or searching out the cultural and social infrastructures of the city. Thus we find strong concentrations of the wealthy in particular districts looking for positional housing goods, cultural amenities and secured locations in a secure city. In the meantime the city is experiencing massive housing stresses, the demolition of public housing provision and a social politics that scapegoats poverty and inward migration by the international poor.

We describe this kind of temporal conjunction and spatial formation as a minimum city in which growing abundance and investment is entwined with national and urban governance interventions that have actively diminished the social assets and spaces of the city for the population beyond its wealthiest residents. These changes are fed by the kind of predatory formation described by Sassen as expulsion in which the wealthy seek to exit responsibilities (including fiscal) while the poorest are expelled from forms of mutual provision and social existence, emblematically in cases like the E15 women who now fight against forced displacement from their social networks and support systems.

The minimum city is a system that advantages the already advantaged, generating further weight behind logics of expulsion that additionally feed accumulation while

denuding the kinds of hard-won social projects that mark Piketty's analysis of the post-war settlement. We conclude with critical reflections for urban and housing studies on the systemic position of the wealthy.



Rowland Atkinson's work crosses the boundaries of urban studies, sociology, geography and criminology. He seeks to look at what are often hidden issues and the causes of different forms of exclusion and inequality. His work focuses on issues of gentrification, public housing and strategies of social mixing to create more sustainable communities and he led initiatives designed to generate more interest in these issues from policy-makers across the UK. Since moving to the University of Sheffield in 2014 he continues to work on urban social problems including the role of the super-rich in residential life in the UK, gentrification, community trauma/violence and social vulnerability.



TRANSPORT POVERTY

A grand challenge for cities now and in the future

Karen Lucas

University of Leeds, Social Exclusion Unit

The ability to be mobile is increasingly recognised as a fundamental to people's everyday lives, but transport supply is highly unequally distributed across different social groups (Hanson, 2010). Previous studies have identified that many socially disadvantaged individuals experience an inadequate supply of transport in the areas in which they live, which prevents their mobility (Lucas et al, 2001, Lucas 2012). Many of these individuals also report very low levels of motility in terms of how far they personally take 'possession of the need to be mobile' (Kaufmann 2009: 58 cited in Kellerman, 2012) and appropriate the 'field of possibilities' to be mobile (Kaufmann and Montulet, 2008:45 cited in Kellerman, 2012). This leads to questions about the social consequences of the relative immobility of these population groups and in particular whether it plays a part in their social exclusion.

In practice, it is often difficult to differentiate between factors of agency and structure in the immobility of individual; the two are often so intertwined that there is little point in attempting to untangle them. In this presentation, I will aim to explore the extent to which immobility is a barrier (or not) to economic and social participation for the residents of two deprived areas of Merseyside in the UK. This is an important issue for sustainable urban policy because it identifies whether it is to address the demand-side constraints of socially disadvantaged individuals, such as affordability or the supply-side failures of the transport system, such as an inadequate supply of transit services.



Karen Lucas is Associate Professor of Transport Geography and Director of Research and Innovation at the Institute of Transport Studies, University of Leeds. She has had 20 years of experience in social research in transport and is a world-leading expert in the area of transport-related social exclusion. She is currently working on a study for the Welsh Government to identify the social and distributional impacts of a road bypass project in the ex-coalfields of South Wales. Karen Lucas also is a regular advisor to national governments in the UK, chair of the Transport Geography Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society and assistant editor of the Journal of Transport Geography.



TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ITS INFLUENCES ON URBAN LIFE

Maik Hömke

Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

In the past decades transport infrastructure and urban quality of life was only linked by technical aspects, like accessibility, connectivity and capability. In this technical view, transport infrastructure was a must for every urban area, the more the better, and was never been questioned.

In the meantime, things are changing. Besides the technical aspects, social aspects of transport infrastructure come be aware. But one have to consider, that social aspects have a very wide range: Starting with the transport infrastructure itself, with its users and non-users, going on with the materials of the infrastructures (streets, rail tracks, airports) and not ending with conversion of transport infrastructures into other usages.

The lecture´s aim is to demonstrate, that research focusing merely on economic macro data effects in given areas and ignoring social aspects of transport infrastructure, inevitably suffers a loss of quality. With the help of some case studies, the mentioned social aspects of transport infrastructure will be shown and the important idea of thinking together technical, economic and social aspects by constructing new transport infrastructure will be underlined.



Maik Hömke studied political science, sociology and philosophy at the Goethe University in Frankfurt/Main. His doctoral research focused on the spatial and social implications of new transport infrastructures and was completed in 2012 at ETH, Zurich. Since 2014 he is teaching at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Art where he is also leading various research projects in the field of urban and regional development.



HafenCity Hamburg GmbH/Thomas Hampel

LIVING IN THE INNER CITY

Strategies to cope with its Specific Qualities, Challenges and Risks

Marcus Menzl

HafenCity, Hamburg

After decades of losing residents to the suburbs, inner city areas are redefining themselves in many metropolitan regions. The inner city renewal also attracts middle class-households with children, a group of households, which preferred in the past to live in suburban, socially segregated and automotive-oriented constellations. This is possible due to fundamental societal changes such as demographic shifts, the redefining of traditional roles, new preference structures (walkable mixed-use neighborhoods with high density and short distances to places of work), and new job profiles based on flexibility, availability, and personal networks.

The inner city as residential area is not only a place of new chances and opportunities but also a place of complex challenges and partly of restrictions the new residents have to cope with. Challenges result out of the densely built and functional as well as socially mixed character of most inner city areas. Focusing on the example of Hafen-City Hamburg we observe different strategies to shape the new quarter, from local engagement to NIMBY-attitudes. Furthermore, lots of new inner city-residents have also to manage inner contradictions: They are torn between their conviction of an intensive urban existence and the longing for a retirement to slow and rural places, without the inner city-complexity and the claim of permanent availability. How can this contradiction be solved? How is it possible to find good balances between more and more ambitious and complex life concepts and the characteristics of an inner city residence? In the presentation some of these coping strategies are introduced and discussed.



Marcus Menzl is a sociologist working for the HafenCity GmbH, a publicly owned limited company running the development of the HafenCity in Hamburg. Within the HafenCity GmbH he is responsible for questions of social development in one of Europe's largest inner city redevelopment areas.



LIVING IN LARGE SCALE HOUSING ESTATES

Perception, problems, quality of life

Maren Harnack

Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

In Germany, large scale housing estates have been built at the edge of cities to counter the persisting housing shortage in the aftermath of World War II. Soon after the majority of these new neighbourhoods were completed, within the urban planning discourse the initial enthusiasm was superseded by fundamental criticism. Whilst many large scale housing estates experienced problems, e.g the belated completion of infrastructure, ongoing construction work and to some extent also bad management, most of this has been addressed with the help of various, in part publicly funded regeneration programmes. Nevertheless large scale housing estates retain their bad reputation and continue to be criticised for their lack of urban qualities. Residents rarely share this view and, on the contrary, in many cases seem to enjoy their life in large scale housing estates.

This presentation seeks to trace the changing urban leitmotifs affecting the perception and criticism of large scale housing estates. It will try to discuss how urban quality of life is on the one hand linked to large scale housing estates and on the other hand to certain aesthetic qualities large scale housing estates cannot offer.



Maren Harnack studied architecture, urban design and social sciences in Stuttgart, Delft and London and completed her PhD on gentrification and post-war council housing at the HafenCity University in Hamburg. She is currently teaching urban design at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences. Her research evolves around the perception, appropriations and image-construction of post-war modernist housing. Publications include topics such as the Nordweststadt in Frankfurt, Trellick Tower and the Brunswick Centre.



CO-HOUSING: UTOPIA (LOST)?

Annette Spellerberg
University of Kaiserslautern

Interest in the neighbourhood has increased considerably by housing companies and social policymakers in recent years. The withdrawal from social services and neglect of the needs of the population in many European countries led to growing importance of communities. Nowadays, grassroots organizations and self-help approaches - especially of senior citizens - emerge. Co-housing projects aim at a new form of neighbourhood and community, in which adults come and live together by purpose and voluntarily without family bonds (Choi, 2004; Bamford, 2005). Construction projects aim at barrier-free units, high ecological standards and eco-friendly environments. As such, these projects are expected to enhance the quality of life of citizens as well as allowing seniors to age in place. In this contribution I am describing organizational patterns, visions of conviviality, push-factors and barriers of co-housing projects. Results show a broad variety of projects, different levels of their acceptance by local authorities, and different levels of community life.

In many cases, co-housing projects try to enhance quality of life in the whole city or village where they are located, and as such can be regarded as social city development. On the one hand, ecological, economic and social aspects of sustainability are more focused on in housing projects than in "normal" neighbourhoods. On the other hand, local projects are clearly limited and not able to overcome state responsibility for social support, organizational backbones and reduction of social problems, linked to inequality and lack of opportunities for participation.



Annette Spellerberg combines studies in urban and regional sociology, social inequality, quality of life, lifestyles, housing and sociology of ageing. She is interested in relationships between social and spatial disparities. Recently she published on urban and regional lifestyles, co-housing and neighbourhood, regional divergence and intelligent technologies for ageing in place. Since 2002 she is full professor of urban sociology at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern. Previously, she worked as a researcher at the FU Berlin, the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin and a research assistant at Bamberg University. In the academic year 1997-1998 she was a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford. Annette Spellerberg received her training in sociology, psychology and education science at the Free University of Berlin (Diploma 1987; PhD 1995).

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