Moving fronts in urban political economy
Fall 2018

Class: Thursdays, 2-5, room 223

Instructor: Jamie Peck (jamie.peck@ubc.ca). Tel: 604 822 0894.
Office hours: M and W 11.15-12.30 (Geog 134), or by appointment

Sept 6 Intro and setup
Sept 13 (Re)theorizing cities Key concepts
Sept 20 Growth machines Key concepts
Sept 27 Urban regimes Key concepts
Oct 4 Regulationist urbanism Key concepts
Oct 11 Global cities Key concepts
Oct 18 No class today
Oct 25 Ordinary cities Critical appreciation
Nov 1 Neoliberal urbanism Critical appreciation
Nov 8 Austerity urbanism Critical appreciation
Nov 15 Financialized cities Critical appreciation
Nov 22 Worlding cities Critical appreciation
Nov 29 Urban China Critical appreciation

This is conceived as a “pro-seminar,” intended to explore the (moving) research frontier in urban political economy in the period since the 1970s, with a principal focus on Anglo-American contributions. More or less sequentially, a sample of significant contributions to the field will be considered (along with some of the “downstream” effects and debates), in order to assess threads of continuity as well as change and innovation.

We will maintain a quite intensive reading and work schedule during the term, with the tradeoff that the final term paper is relatively short. Each student is required to (a) complete the assigned readings, drafting a 1-2pp reaction paper each week for submission (no later than midnight Tuesday) to the Dropbox folder; (b) serve twice as a session convenor, reviewing and thematizing the reaction papers, co-chairing in-class discussions; (c) write a 3pp “key concepts” paper on a key figure in the field of urban political economy, presenting this in written and oral form to the class; (d) write a “critical appreciation” of an individually chosen monograph in the field, for oral presentation to the class and submission in written form no later than December 11.

Assessment: class participation and weekly reaction papers 30%; key concepts paper 25%; critical appreciation presentation and written assignment 45%.

Key concepts paper: Each student will write a “key concepts” primer, on one of the following figures in urban political economy: Janet Abu-Lughod, Ash Amin, Neil Brenner, Manuel Castells, Mike
Davis, Michael Dear, Susan Fainstein, Steve Graham, Peter Hall, David Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, Helga Leitner, Doreen Massey, Margit Mayer, Harvey Molotch, Jennifer Robinson, Saskia Sassen, AbdouMaliq Simone, Ed Soja, Fulong Wu, Sharon Z ukin, or an author of your choice. The primer should not exceed three pages and should include: a bio paragraph, an overview of the research program with a focus on key conceptual/methodological innovations and contributions, and a brief bibliography of not more than six items.

Critical appreciation assignment: Each student will write a “critical appreciation” of an individually chosen book that they admire in the field of urban political economy, with an emphasis on constructive reading and internal critique, together with an eye to positive (and “transferrable”) lessons for urban theory, methodology, and research practice. These should be monographs (not edited collections), and they should engage squarely, rather than obliquely, with the problematics of urban political economy. Beyond that, the choice is with each student. You may want to consider books by the authors featured on the syllabus, or to venture beyond. Each student will prepare a 15-minute presentation for the class (followed by Q&A), with the written versions of each assignment (not exceeding 12pp of 1.5 spaced text, with the bibliography being additional) due at the end of term.

September 6

Introduction and setup


September 13

(Re)theorizing cities

Harvey D (1973) *Social justice and the city.* London: Edward Arnold, chapter 7

September 20

Growth machines


**September 27**

**Urban regimes**


**October 4**

**Regulationist urbanism**


**October 11**

**Global cities**


Each student should also choose a chapter to read from this collection, bringing their comments, thoughts, and reactions to the class:

**October 25**

**Ordinary cities**


**November 1**

**Neoliberal urbanism**


**November 8**

**Austerity urbanism**


**November 15**  
**Financialized cities**


**November 22**  
**Worlding cities**


Each student should also choose a chapter to read from this collection, bringing their comments, thoughts, and reactions to the class:

**November 29**  
**Urban China**


