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14th Street in DC



Metropolitan Policy Center Director
Derek Hyra

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We had a fantastic initial year at the School of Public Affairs Metropolitan Policy Center (MPC) and we thank all of you who helped to make it so successful. Some highlights included securing over \$70,000 in external research funding; obtaining a book contract with Routledge for *Capital Dilemma: Growth and Inequality in Washington, DC* (released in November 2015); the publication of our research in top scholarly outlets such as the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, the *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *Urban Geography*, and *Urban Studies*; media coverage in the *Associated Press*, *CityLab*, *Governing Magazine*, the *Washington Post*, and *National Public Radio*; the deployment of \$30,000 to seed American University faculty collaborative research projects; the featuring of 16 urban experts at our Urban Speaker and Public Engagement Series; William Julius Wilson's incredible inaugural Annual Spring Lecture; and awarding three student prizes for exceptional research.

We look forward to an even more active and impactful year two as we continue to build a "DC School" of knowledge and influence important urban policy debates. Be on the lookout for the release of two additional books on Washington, DC; results from a comprehensive survey investigating the racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods of the DC region; and policy insights on stimulating DC's regional economy from the Roadmap Initiative. We believe DC, and its region, is an incredibly fruitful place to understand metropolitan and urban transformation. While focusing on the nation's capital, we continue to investigate and learn from urban circumstances throughout the US and around the world.

By working across geographies and traditional disciplinary lines, we aim to advance cutting-edge research and deploy sensible policy solutions to make our metropolitan regions and cities more prosperous and equitable. Please join us in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Derek Hyra

WHO WE ARE

STAFF

- Derek Hyra, Director
- Statia Thomas, Office Manager
- Trevor Langan, Communications Manager
- Meghan Doughty, Graduate Assistant
- James Wright, Graduate Assistant



MPC Staff Members James Wright, Statia Thomas, and Meghan Doughty

FACULTY FELLOWS

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Michael Bader, CAS | Jocelyn Johnston, SPA |
| Angie Chuang, SOC | Daniel Kerr, CAS |
| Maria De Jesus, SIS | Taryn Morrissey, SPA |
| Daniel Esser, SIS | David Pike, CAS |
| Lewis Faulk, SPA | Malini Ranganathan, SIS |
| Sonya Grier, KSB | Brenda Smith, WCL |
| Bradley Hardy, SPA | |

American University Units	
CAS	College of Arts and Sciences
KSB	Kogod School of Business
SIS	School of International Service

SOC	School of Communications
SPA	School of Public Affairs
WCL	Washington College of Law



Advisory Board Members Clarence Stone, Blair Ruble, Barbara Romzek, and Margery Austin Turner

ADVISORY BOARD

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- Thomas Sugrue, New York University
- Margery Austin Turner, The Urban Institute
- William Julius Wilson, Harvard University



Building in NYC

WHAT WE DO

MISSION

MPC's mission is to understand the intersections among various social, economic, and political processes, at multiple levels, that influence metropolitan and urban landscapes. MPC utilizes mixed methods to uncover, explain and recommend solutions to important 21st century metropolitan and urban issues including: affordable housing, economic and neighborhood development, racial and ethnic diversity, urban politics and regional governance, and non-profit service provision.



Peace mural

OBJECTIVES

MPC has three important objectives. The first is to cultivate innovative cross-disciplinary metropolitan and urban research that helps to improve public policy and people's lives. Secondly, MPC works to garner sufficient external university grants from governments, private foundations, and corporate institutions, to support collaborative research projects. Lastly, MPC highlights and demonstrates American University's engagement in Washington, DC.

"The issues that DC and other metropolitan and urban areas are addressing are complex and cross-disciplinary. Our plan for the Center acknowledges the need to bring together a multidisciplinary group of experts in social, economic and political processes."

Barbara Romzek,
Dean of the School of Public Affairs

STRATEGIES

MPC achieves its mission and objectives through three strategies. One, it advances and supports complex, innovative AU metropolitan and urban scholarship across disciplines and research methods. Two, MPC hosts campus events on important metropolitan and urban topics. Three, MPC promotes community engagement through cultivating strategic partnerships with communities, businesses, non-profits, and grassroots organizations.

ONGOING RESEARCH

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TO WHAT END? DOCUMENTING EXTREME POVERTY

Faculty Fellow Daniel Kerr is currently working on a manuscript, *“To What End? Documenting Extreme Poverty,”* under contract with Oxford University Press. It draws extensively from the oral histories he collected for the Cleveland Homeless Oral History Project. *“To What End?”* traces the evolution of the Cleveland Homeless Oral History Project’s methodology, analyzes the interviews as historical evidence, and explores the multiple ways narrators used the project to meet their own ends. The manuscript raises the question: Can academic research go beyond addressing the ends of the scholar, but also attend to the needs of those whose lives are being documented? This project will transform the way we think about poverty and homelessness.



Daniel Kerr



ECONOMIC AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY AND CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Under the direction of Faculty Fellow Taryn Morrissey, three investigations focus on the associations between neighborhood disadvantage and child development. These studies assume that family characteristics have large effects but investigate how neighborhoods provide both structural and social supports that together constitute an important context for child development. One project examines the relationships among neighborhood poverty, food insecurity, and public food assistance among families with young children. A second project examines neighborhood poverty as a moderating influence on the effects of early care and education and children’s school readiness at kindergarten entry. Lastly, a third project investigates whether neighborhood characteristics help explain racial and ethnic disparities in obesity, body mass index, and health behaviors among young children. These studies will uncover how distinct urban neighborhood contexts effect important child health and development outcomes.

DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Faculty Fellow Malini Ranganathan is investigating urban environmental injustices in the US from the Global South. “Environmental Justice” (EJ) as an arena of activist and scholarly intervention has long been dominated by theoretical insights and empirical cases from the Global South, and is seldom deployed in research on cities in the Global North. This project asks: How can we bring insights on the complexity of the state, the political economy of urban informality, and grassroots political agency to bear on questions of EJ in the Global North? How, for instance, can the water-deprived and primarily Latino urban fringes of California’s Central Valley be theorized as similar to a “Third World” urban space? Through ethnographic and environmental health research, this project brings together theoretical perspectives that have been traditionally separated in critical urban scholarship across the North-South divide.



Taryn Morrissey



Malini Ranganathan

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

AMERICAN OTHERNESS

Faculty Fellow Angie Chuang's research focuses on the news media's role in mediating American identity and that of people of color, immigrants, and religious minorities. Through case study analysis, Chuang's work on **American Otherness** has been published in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism*, and *Communication, Culture & Critique*. Her case studies have addressed a range of news phenomena, including coverage of Latino youth featured in stories about the DREAM Act legislation, of the 2002 DC Sniper shootings, and of "homegrown" terrorism by Muslim Americans. This project highlights how media representations contribute to American urban identity formation.



Angie Chuang

THE DC AREA SURVEY

Faculty Fellow Michael Bader is leading **The DC Area Survey**. The DC Area Survey consists of an annual representative survey of Washington and its surrounding jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia. In its first year, the survey will focus on "global neighborhoods" and Latino communities in Washington, DC and the four counties that surround it. The survey focuses on neighborhood satisfaction and change, health conditions and behaviors, crime and policing, and governance. The DC Area Survey has the participation of over 10 American University (AU) faculty and is supported by several AU offices, units, and centers including the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, the School of Public Affairs, the Kogod School of Business, the Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, and the Center on Health, Risk, and Society. This project will greatly contribute to understandings of attitudes and behaviors in racially and ethnically diverse suburban and urban neighborhoods.

★★★ THE DC AREA SURVEY METROPOLITAN NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

URBAN POLITICS AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

POLITICAL DISPLACEMENT PROJECT

In some neighborhoods, gentrification—defined as neighborhood change resulting from an influx of middle-class residents into a low-income area—does not always result in significant residential displacement due to affordable housing policies that help to keep a sizable proportion of long-term, low-income residents in place as their neighborhood redevelops. While newcomer influx can promote mixed-income neighborhoods and economic integration, it can result in political displacement, a process that involves the loss of political voice among longstanding residents due to neighborhood change. Minority groups who were well-represented at the local levels might find themselves losing seats on city councils, county commissions, and community boards as new constituencies and coalitions form among newcomers. This study, led by Derek Hyra, analyzes the relationships among newcomer influx, neighborhood development, and political representation in US cities that contain gentrifying neighborhoods. Using local election data, we identify and measure the extent that political displacement has occurred alongside inner city neighborhood redevelopment. This study will help determine whether central city neighborhood redevelopment relates to urban electoral shifts.

THE ROADMAP INITIATIVE

MPC is participating in a research partnership with the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University (GMU) and INFORUM at the University of Maryland. This initiative, the **Roadmap for the Washington Region's Economic Future**, is investigating aspects of the Washington area's regional economy. This research will define the region's core, non-federally dependent advanced industrial clusters, understand the main business constraints across these clusters, assess the current state and local economic development policy landscape that targets these clusters, and recommend policy reforms to advance the overall regional economy.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT EFFECTS IN WASHINGTON, DC

Faculty Fellow Bradley Hardy's research project uses administrative tax data to **assess the effect of the District of Columbia's (DC) supplemental earned income tax credit (EITC) and the federal EITC on poverty, employment, and income dynamics in Washington, DC.** The supplemental DC EITC has existed since 2001, and has expanded from 10 percent of the federal credit to 40 percent as of 2009. At the federal level, the EITC is the nation's largest cash transfer program for the low-income families. In preliminary work with coauthors, Hardy finds that the combined EITC raises employment, lowers longer term poverty, and reduces instability from income declines. Future planned projects will examine issues surrounding income and wealth inequality within the District.



Bradley Hardy



Public housing in Chicago

NON-PROFIT SERVICE DIVISION

GRANT SEEKING AND THE GRANT MAKING STUDY

Faculty Fellow Lewis Faulk is working on the **Grant Seeking and the Grant Making Study**, which are parallel surveys of non-profit organizations and foundations. The project's purpose is to examine both the effectiveness of grant-seeking behaviors of non-profits and the recent challenges foundations face when distributing their grants. Together these surveys will collect data on over 450 non-profit organizations and 300 foundations. The analysis of these surveys will provide key insights on the state of civil society in metropolitan America.



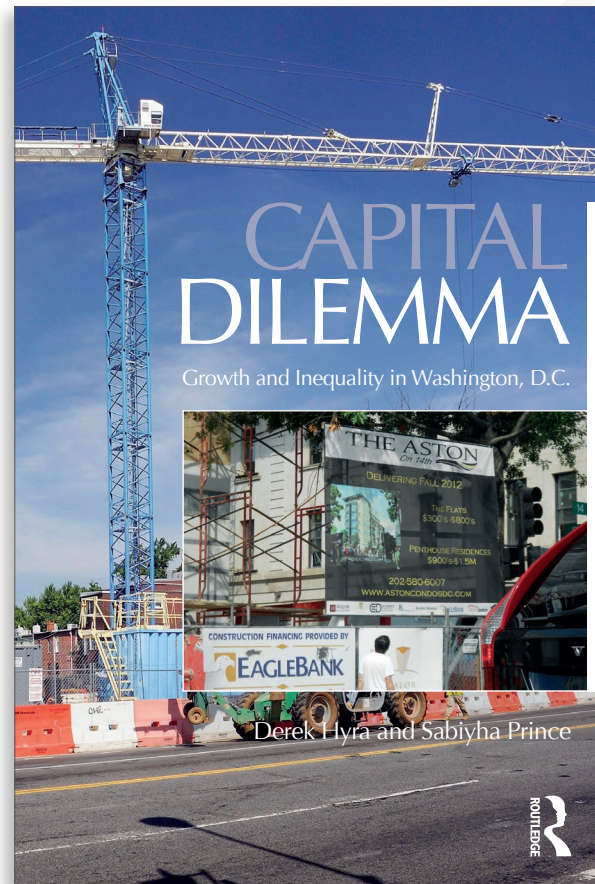
Lewis Faulk

BUILDING A DC SCHOOL

American urban studies scholars have long relied on New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago as the basis for their research and approaches to urban policy. We believe Washington, DC offers an equally compelling case for understanding today's urban and metropolitan challenges. It is our goal to build a "DC School" of knowledge. We work toward achieving this aspiration in two ways. First, we conduct and publish DC-related research. And second, we equip researchers with seed funding to develop and collaborate on interdisciplinary research projects that focus on the city and its region.

RECENT AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

We have three significant books that will help define the importance and meaning of the monumental changes taking place in the nation's capital.

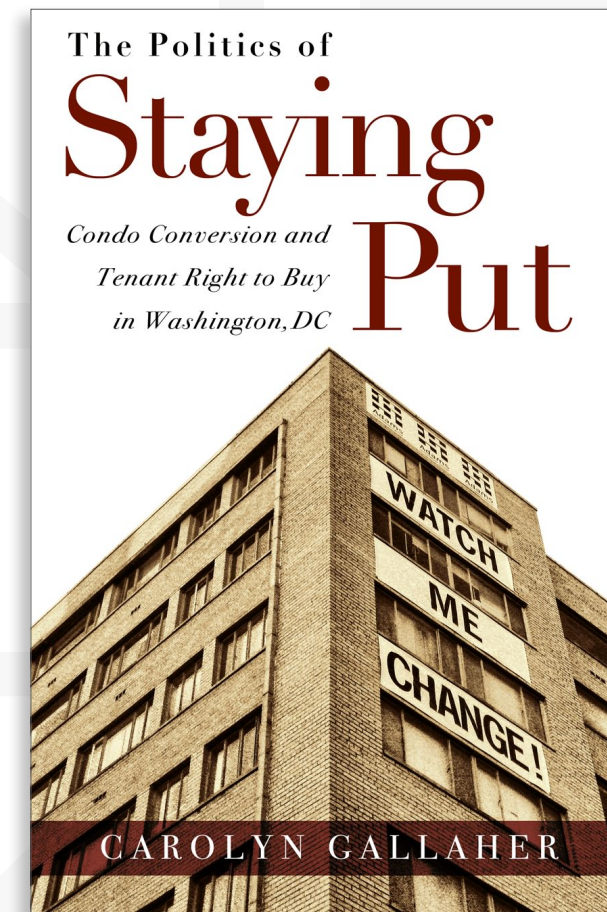


[CAPITAL DILEMMA: Growth and Inequality in Washington, DC](#)

Edited by Derek Hyra and Sabiyha Prince, *Capital Dilemma: Growth and Inequality in Washington, DC* uncovers and explains the dynamics that have influenced the contemporary economic advancement of the nation's capital. This volume's unique interdisciplinary approach using historical, sociological, anthropological, economic, geographic, political, and linguistic theories and approaches, captures the comprehensive factors related to changes taking place in one of the world's most important cities. While accounting for historic disparities, mainly along race and class lines, this book reveals how more recent federal and city political decisions and circumstances shape the city's current neighborhood gentrification patterns. The Capital Dilemma for DC, and other major cities, is how to produce sustainable equitable economic growth. This volume greatly expands our understandings of the contradictions, challenges, and opportunities associated with modern day urban development.

MAKING THE GILDED GHETTO: Race, Class and Politics in the Cappuccino City

In this book, Derek Hyra outlines, details and explains the array of forces changing, not only the DC urban landscape, but more broadly our nation's urban fabric. At the center of this metropolitan drama are new powerful economic and political forces, the legacy of racial tensions, emerging racial tolerance, and new urban living preferences. Hyra experiences the transformation of Washington's Shaw/U Street neighborhood as a community organizer, and observes, assesses, and explains how these forces come together to understand gentrification and its political and cultural consequences. This book reveals the on-the-ground realities of mixed-income living. Specifically, this manuscript unpacks the tensions between the new and the old, the White and the Black, the rich and the poor, and the gay and the straight. While tolerance for diversity on many levels is greater than ever, these traditional categories are still important to understanding today's urban drama. The book explains why resentment builds even among the vulnerable poor who are able to stay in place as redevelopment persists. Making the Gilded Ghetto reveals a monumental phase in US urban development history and is bound to advance urban theory and policy.



[THE POLITICS OF STAYING PUT: Condo Conversion and Tenant Right to Buy in Washington](#)

Carolyn Gallaher is completing a book about a unique law in the District of Columbia—the **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act**—that allows tenants to buy their apartment buildings when their landlord sells it or chooses to convert to condominiums. Her analysis tracks the program's level of success at keeping people in place between 2000 and 2013, a period of rapid gentrification in the District.

Gallaher became an MPC Faculty Fellow in the fall of 2015.

FACULTY SEED GRANTS

At the end of the Fall 2014 semester, MPC released a call for collaborative research proposals centered on Washington, DC that advanced one or more of MPC's focus areas. Submissions were required to be collaborative projects with a minimum of two American University faculty investigators with different disciplinary training. Three winning proposals were funded to support research on historic preservation, gentrification and organizational change, and neighborhood responses to environmental vulnerability and resilience. Below are the titles and principal investigators of the 2015 funded MPC faculty seed grants.

Preserving the History of African American Veterans in the District

PIs: Brenda Smith (WCL) and Angie Chuang (SOC)

Changing Landscapes: Intra-Metropolitan Population Shifts and the Responsiveness of Local Non-profit Organizations

PIs: Lewis Faulk (SPA) and Michael Bader (CAS)

Tackling Urban Vulnerability: Lessons for Building Community Resilience and Climate Justice in Washington, DC

PIs: Malini Ranganathan (SIS) and Eve Bratman (SIS)



Brenda Smith, Lewis Faulk, and Malini Ranganathan

ARTICLES, REPORTS, AND PUBLICATIONS

At MPC we strive to be a leading institution that produces novel and important urban-related research that is disseminated in scholarly outlets and influences important policy debates. In the 2014-2015 academic year, our Staff and Faculty Fellows have published several articles on economic and neighborhood development, race and ethnic diversity, and urban politics in well-regarded academic journals.

URBAN POLITICS

Derek Hyra in *Urban Studies*, 2015

[“The Back-to-the-City Movement: Neighbourhood Redevelopment and Processes of Political and Cultural Displacement”](#)

ABSTRACT: While certain US cities are still depopulating, others have experienced a population influx. This study investigates the consequences of the back-to-the-city movement through a four-year (2009–2012) ethnographic case study of the revitalization of Washington, DC's Shaw/U Street neighborhood. While affordable housing efforts help to keep a portion of long-term, low-income residents in place, political and cultural displacement is occurring as upper-income newcomers flock into this neighborhood.



Gentrification in Washington, DC

ECONOMIC AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Esser in *Environment and Urbanization*, 2014

[“Security Scales: Spectacular and Endemic Violence in Post-Invasion Kabul, Afghanistan”](#)

ABSTRACT: This article juxtaposes two distinct violent dynamics in a highly securitized urban space: one covered by global media in every detail, yet of marginal importance to the vast majority of city dwellers; the other endemic, but absent from outsiders' urban imaginary of life and death in Kabul. Although insurgent forces have utilized Afghanistan's capital city as a stage for acts of spectacular violence ever since the 2001 international invasion, for most city dwellers, especially women and children, domestic abuse has constituted the main threat to physical well-being. The analysis in this paper demonstrates how such scalar politics of security have turned Kabul into an urban stage that provides global visibility of spectacular violence against foreigners while eclipsing endemic causes of bodily harm among Afghans.

Derek Hyra and Meghan Doughty's white paper commissioned by the National Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders, 2015
"SBA Lending: Equity and Efficiency Challenges"

ABSTRACT: This report analyzes the equity and efficiency challenges of the Small Business Administration's lending programs. As America has slowly recovered from the Great Recession, the SBA's 7(a) and 504 programs have grown and supported over \$122 billion in private loans to America's small businesses. However, during this period of SBA loan dollar expansion, lending rates for African American firms have decreased while loan guarantee assistance increased or remained relatively stable for other racial and ethnic group owned firms. This report recommends an emerging market program to address racial lending inequities and suggests further research to better document the ways in which SBA lending contributes to America's prosperity.



Malini Ranganathan in Antipode, 2015
"Storm Drains as Assemblages: The Political Ecology of Flood Risk in Post-Colonial Bangalore"

ABSTRACT: Cities around the world are increasingly prone to unequal flood risk. This paper "materializes" the political ecology of urban flood risk by casting stormwater drains—a key artifact implicated in flooding—as recombinant socio-natural assemblages. Examining flood risk in the city of Bangalore, India

leads to two arguments. First, the dialectics of "flow" and "fixity" are useful in historicizing the relational politics of storm drains from the colonial to the neoliberal era. Second, flood risk has been heightened in the contemporary moment because of an intensified alignment between the flow/fixity of capital and storm drains.

Malini Ranganathan in Urban Geography, 2015
"Water Marginalization at the Urban Fringe: Environmental Justice and Political Ecology Across the North-South Divide"

ABSTRACT: This article reconsiders the epistemic and geographic boundaries that have long separated scholarship on urban water poverty and politics in the Global North and South. Tooleville, outside of the city of Exeter in California's Central Valley, and Bommanahalli, outside of Bangalore, India, are examined to illuminate the geography of water marginalization at the fringes of urban areas. Through this examination, scope for transnational learning is found in three arenas in particular: (1) water access, (2) state practice, and (3) political agency.

Malini Ranganathan in the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 2014
"Paying for Water, Claiming Citizenship: Political Agency and Water Reforms at the Urban Periphery"

ABSTRACT: This article interrogates the nature of political agency deployed at sites of market-oriented water reforms. It presents a case study from Bangalore, India of a water project mandating significant 'beneficiary' cash contributions from lower-middle-class dwellers for the capital cost of extending piped water to the city's peripheries. It illustrates why property owners who lack formal water access and land tenure consent to paying for pipes rather than resist all together despite the high cost involved. Payment thus comprises a terrain of contested meaning making and political struggle, at the heart of which lie the stakes of urban citizenship.



Malini Ranganathan in Water Alternatives, 2014
"Mafias in the Waterscape: Urban Informality and Everyday Public Authority in Bangalore"

ABSTRACT: This article investigates the phenomenon of Bangalore's urban 'water mafias', operators who extract and deliver groundwater to scores of informal residential areas in Indian cities. Rather than seeing mafias as filling a gap where government water supply has failed, as mainstream narratives suggest, the paper argues that mafias must be seen as formative of the post-colonial state. It further suggests that the specific form of public authority exercised by water mafias explains the production of informality in Bangalore's waterscape.

Malini Ranganathan in Governing Urban Futures, London School of Economics and Political Science Urban Age Series, 2014
"High Tech and the Monsoon"

ABSTRACT: Flood-related anxieties and uncertainties mark the experience of everyday life for a great many of South Asia's urban dwellers. While the subcontinent's large coastal and deltaic cities appear to be obvious candidates for flooding—and are frequently brought to a standstill during monsoonal rains—cities located inland provide more perplexing instances of flood risk. That chronic flooding is on the rise in these seemingly less flood-inclined cities provides insight into the social, spatial, and political-economic drivers of urban flood risk and uncertainty. The origins of flood risk and vulnerability in urban areas are, in other words, deeply social and political.



Sonya Grier in the Journal of Business Research, 2015
"A Tale of Two Urbanities: Adolescent Alcohol and Cigarette Consumption in High and Low-Poverty Urban Neighborhoods"

ABSTRACT: Urbanicity encompasses the different aspects of living in an urban area. This research employs an empirical study to show how intra-urban differences by poverty are associated with cigarette and alcohol consumption by adolescents. Results demonstrate that for higher poverty adolescents, those living in urban versus less urban areas consume significantly more alcohol and cigarettes. Among wealthier adolescents, those living in urban versus less urban areas consume significantly fewer of those items. The results suggest that it might be useful to consider new ways of understanding problem consumption by studying distinct aspects of urbanicity related to the retail environment.

Derek Hyra in the Journal of Urban Affairs, 2015
"The Obama Administration's Place-Based Initiatives: Why Not Include Small Business Lending Components?"

ABSTRACT: The Obama administration has orchestrated a cadre of pilot comprehensive community-style initiatives known collectively as the Ladders of Opportunity/Promise Zones. Initiatives attempt to ameliorate the negative effects of concentrated poverty by targeting residential, educational, environmental, and employment concerns. These development efforts are great in societal scope, but could be enhanced by adding a small business lending component, particularly in communities transitioning to more mixed-income environments.



Decaying buildings in Harlem

Michael Bader in *Health & Place*, 2015
[“Development and Deployment of the Computer Assisted Neighborhood Visual Assessment System \(CANVAS\) to Measure Health-Related Neighborhood Conditions”](#)

ABSTRACT: Public health research has shown that neighborhood conditions are associated with health behaviors and outcomes. Systematic neighborhood audits have helped researchers measure neighborhood conditions that they deem theoretically relevant but not available in existing administrative data. Systematic audits, however, are expensive to conduct and rarely comparable across geographic regions. We describe the development of an online application, the Computer Assisted Neighborhood Visual Assessment System (CANVAS), that uses Google Street View to conduct virtual audits of neighborhood environments. Results conclude that Google Street View and CANVAS offer opportunities to develop greater comparability across neighborhood audit studies.

Michael Bader in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 2014
[“Validity of an Ecometric Neighborhood Physical Disorder Measure Constructed by Virtual Street Audit”](#)

ABSTRACT: Neighborhood physical disorder is thought to affect mental and physical health, but it has been difficult to measure objectively and reliably across large geographical areas or multiple locales. Virtual street audits are a novel method for assessing neighborhood characteristics. This study evaluates the ecometric properties of a neighborhood physical disorder measure constructed from virtual street audit data. Results suggest that neighborhood physical disorder can be measured reliably and validly using virtual audits, facilitating research on possible associations between physical disorder and health.

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Michael Bader in *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 2015
[“Community Attraction and Avoidance in Chicago: What’s Race Got to Do with It?”](#)

ABSTRACT: This paper argues relative persistence of racial segregation is due, at least in part, to the process of residential search and the perceptions upon which those searches are based. Examining where Chicago-area residents would “seriously consider” and “never consider” living finds that community attraction and avoidance are highly racialized. Race most clearly shapes the residential perceptions and preferences of whites, and matters the least to blacks. While neighborhood perception may cause persistent segregation, it may also offer hope for integration with appropriate policy interventions.

Maria De Jesus in *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, 2015
[“Attitudes, Perceptions, and Behaviors toward HIV Testing Among African American and East African Immigrant Women in Washington, DC: Implications for Targeted HIV Testing Promotion and Communication Strategies”](#)

ABSTRACT: The objective of the study is to examine and compare the HIV testing attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors between African-American and East African immigrant women in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Overall, African-American women have more favorable views towards HIV testing than East African immigrant women. There are many barriers that impede women from seeking an HIV test including negative assumptions, negative emotions, and potential negative reactions from partner or others. The study highlights the complexity of factors that constrain women from presenting themselves voluntarily for an HIV test and shows the nuances between African-American and East African perceptions. The implications for effective targeted HIV screening promotion and communication strategies among these groups of women are discussed.

Elevated train in Chicago



IN THE MEDIA



Global Cities

[“Africa’s Population Will Quadruple by 2100. What Does That Mean for its Cities?”](#)

by Sam Sturgis
on Sept. 19, 2014 in The Atlantic’s CityLab

Malini Ranganathan: *“The population-centric viewpoint tends to homogenize Africa, and that’s a real problem with the understandings of Africa.”*

Displacement

[“Initiative to Revitalize Barry Farm is Little More than an Urban Dispersal Plan”](#)

by Courtland Milloy
on October 24, 2014 in *The Washington Post*

Derek Hyra: *“A very small percentage of displaced public housing residents returned to the newly created mixed-income neighborhoods that replaced the razed distressed public housing stock.”*

Urban Unrest

[“Baltimore Riot Damage Is Hurting Local Businesses”](#)

by David Dishneau and Joyce M. Rosenberg
on April 30, 2015 in the *Associated Press*

Derek Hyra: *“It takes a long time in people’s collective memory to remember these are vibrant, safe communities worth investing in.”*

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

[“2015’s Most Diverse Cities in America”](#)

by Richie Bernardo
on May 13, 2015 in WalletHub

Derek Hyra: *“In several diverse cities, mixed-income and mixed-race communities are proliferating. In these communities there is a tremendous amount of creativity, innovation, and conflict.”*

Equitable Gentrification

[“3 Things Cities and HUD Can Do to Stop Gentrification That Segregates”](#)

by Derek Hyra
on June 30, 2015 in NextCity

Derek Hyra: *“So-called ‘diverse’ communities often remain internally segregated because meaningful interactions across income and class have failed to materialize.”*

Racial Segregation

[“How Race Still Influences Where We Choose to Live”](#)

by Emily Badger
on July 17, 2015 in *The Washington Post*

Michael Bader: *“They’ll [Whites] stay as long as integration comes to them.”*

Micro-segregation

[“Micro-Segregation: Creating Cohesion In Gentrified Communities”](#)

on July 23, 2015 on WAMU’s The Kojo Nnamdi Show

Derek Hyra: *“New federal housing rules aimed at diversifying neighborhoods are being hailed as a key tool to end urban inequality and unrest. But in quickly gentrifying cities like Washington, DC, efforts to diversify can have unintended consequences.”*



EVENTS

URBAN SPEAKER SERIES

During the 2014-2015 academic year, MPC hosted many events with local and regional urban scholars. This included the following researchers and presentations (in chronological order):



Brian McCabe

Michael Bader, American University, *"Neighborhood Stigma and the Negative Space of Neighborhood Effects"*

Amanda Huron, University of the District of Columbia, *"Theorizing the Urban Commons: Limited-Equity Co-ops in DC"*

Brandi Summers, Virginia Commonwealth University, *"H Street, Main Street and the Neoliberal Aesthetics of Cool"*

Gregory Squires, George Washington University, *"Inequality and the Foreclosure Crisis"*

Taryn Morrissey, American University, *"Head Start and Children's School Readiness: Variations by Family and Neighborhood Poverty"*

Sonya Grier, American University, *"Dog Parks & Coffee Shops: Diversity Seeking in Changing Neighborhoods"*

Brian McCabe, Georgetown University, *"No Place Like Home: Wealth, Community & the American Dream"*

Bradley Hardy, American University, *"The Effect of DC's Supplemental EITC on Poverty, Employment, and Income Growth"*



Nathan Connolly

David Pike, American University, *"Slum Lore: What Cultural Studies Can Tell Us About Urban Inequality"*

Nathan Connolly, New York University, *"A Little Insurance: Landlords, Colored People, and Forgotten Uses of the Federal Housing Administration"*

Willow Lung-Amam, University of Maryland, *"The Right of Suburbia: Redevelopment and Resistance on the Urban Edge"*



Willow Lung-Amam

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SERIES

MPC hosted a number of notable Washington professionals who presented on urban policy issues such as affordable housing and urban politics. They included (in chronological order):

Robert Burns, President/CEO, City First Homes

Blair Ruble, Vice President, The Wilson Center

Margery Austin Turner, Vice President, The Urban Institute

Harry Jaffe, National Editor, Washingtonian Magazine

Tom Sherwood, Reporter, NBC4

Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood



ANNUAL SPRING LECTURE

MPC was proud to host William Julius Wilson as the keynote presenter at the first Annual Spring Lecture. Wilson is a world renowned urban sociologist and the Lewis P. and Linda L. Geysler University Professor at Harvard University, one of only 24 University Professors at Harvard. Past President of the American Sociological Association, Wilson has received 45 honorary degrees. He is also a recipient of the 1998 National Medal of Science, the highest scientific honor in the United States.

Wilson's talk, entitled "The Effects of Living in Poor Urban Neighborhoods," addressed the political and scholarly importance and impact of his books *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* and *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. Wilson's presentation was passionate and engaging.



A great turnout for our Annual Spring Lecture



William Julius Wilson with lecture attendees

Our next Annual Spring Lecture will feature Edward Glaeser, a professor of economics in the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is Director of the Taubman Center for State and Local Government and Director of the Rappaport Institute of Greater Boston. Glaeser's work focuses on the determinants of city growth and the role of cities as centers of idea transmission. His 2011 book *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier* contends that "cities magnify humanity's strengths." Glaeser's lecture will take place March 24, 2016, at 4:00 pm in the SIS Founders Room.

CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

This year, MPC co-sponsored a number of events in the Washington area, including the following:



AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

with AU Middle East Studies: "*Understanding Urban Segregation in Cairo: The Social and Spatial Logic of a Fragmented City*" by Abdelbaseer Elsayed, moderated by Professor Diane Singerman

with the AU Center for Health, Risk, and Society: "*The End of Black Metropolis?*" by Mary Pattillo



with George Washington University: "*Equitable Development in DC: Sustainability from Below*"



with the Center for Latin American & Latino Studies and the Wilson Center: "*Urban Violence: Building Safe and Inclusive Cities in Latin America*"



with George Mason University: "*Forum on Health, Homelessness and Poverty*"



with The Urban Institute: "*Shaping the Future of Non-profit Data Symposium*"

PRESENTATIONS

MPC Staff and Fellows presented papers and ongoing research, both domestically and abroad, at many conferences, events, and institutions this past year, including:

ON-CAMPUS

Center for Health, Risk, and
Society's Seminar Series
Humanities Lab's Speaker Series on Geographies
Kay Spiritual Life Center
MPC Urban Speaker Series
University Library Research in Progress Series



The School of Public Affairs at American University

Monuments in DC



OFF-CAMPUS

Albuquerque, NM

Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management's Fall 2014 Research Conference

Cape Town, South Africa

University of Cape Town's African Center for Cities
International Expert Forum on Peacebuilding

Chicago, IL

Annual Congress of the Latin American Studies Association
Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association
Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers

Florence, Italy

Everyday Life in the 21st Century City International Conference

Lexington, KY

University of Kentucky, Department of Economics Mark C. Berger Seminar

Miami, FL

Urban Affairs Association's 45th Annual Meeting

Minneapolis, MN

Public Management Research Association Conference

New Orleans, LA

Southern Sociological Society 78th Annual Meeting

New York, NY

New York University's Psychology and Social Intervention Program Colloquium

Philadelphia, PA

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning 54th Annual Conference

Stanford, CA

Stanford University's Urban Beyond Measure: Registering Urban Environments in the
Global South Conference

Washington, DC

American Institute of Certified Planners' Symposium on Housing Equity and Healthy Housing Choices
DC Office of Planning's Brown Bag Lunch Series
EcoDistricts Summit
George Washington University's Sustainable Urban Planning Program's 2015 Research Symposium
National Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders Board
Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum
United States Army Chief of Staff
The Urban Institute

STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MPC STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION

At this year's Annual Spring Lecture, MPC invited students to display posters addressing questions regarding metropolitan and urban policy issues in the DC area. The following students won best poster in their respective student level category and a \$500 cash prize.

PH.D. LEVEL

Riordan Frost (SPA), *"Commuting Sustainably: The Role of State Smart Growth Policies in Transportation"*

MASTERS LEVEL

Claudia Barragán (SIS), *"Geopolitical Ecologies of Racial Dispersal: Paths of Fragmentation and Gentrification in the Washington, DC Region"*

UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

Anna Sutton (SIS), *"Jump-outs in DC: Racialized Policing as a Reality"*



Students with William Julius Wilson

MPC STUDENT STAFF PRESENTATIONS

Meghan Doughty presented her research, *"Women & Children First? The US Response to Domestic Violence and the Value of a Human Rights Approach,"* at The Oxford Symposium on History, Human Rights & Law in England.

Trevor Langan was awarded a grant by both MPC and the University Honors Program to complete his Honors capstone project *"Breeding Creative Cities: The Relationship Between Political Culture and Policy Success."* He presented his work at both the SPA Research Symposium and the University Honors Program Research Symposium.

James Wright presented his research entitled, *"Building a Framework to Test Trust in Community Policing Programs,"* at the Urban Affairs Association Conference in Miami and at the Conference of Minority Public Administrators in Philadelphia.

ACCOLADES

"Through a diverse and engaged set of faculty, students, and researchers, the Metropolitan Policy Center is helping to cultivate the next generation of research and thought leaders in urban research. The work emerging through MPC reflects a level of rigor and sensibility about street-level practice that make insights relevant to a wide variety of scholars, policymakers, and advocates."

- Scott Allard, Professor, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Washington



Scott Allard

"In a short period of time, MPC has positioned itself to become a leading player in on-going debates over politics and policy in urban life."

- Lance Freeman, Professor and Director, Urban Planning Program, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University



Lance Freeman

"The dynamic diversity of life in the Washington DC metropolitan area is matched by the sweeping range of research and educational activities that infuse the Metropolitan Policy Center. In just one year, the Center has established itself as a vital contributor to the scholarly, cultural, and political life of DC. A most welcome addition!"

- Gregory D. Squires, Professor of Sociology and Public Policy & Public Administration, George Washington University



Gregory D. Squires

"MPC is a much needed asset for the DC region--sparking relevant research, bringing scholars and others together in valuable dialogues, and in a variety of ways spotlighting key issues confronting a dynamic and challenging metropolitan landscape."

- Clarence Stone, Research Professor, George Washington University



Clarence Stone

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MPC would like to thank the following individuals, groups, and AU units for their key contributions that helped make MPC's first year such a tremendous success:

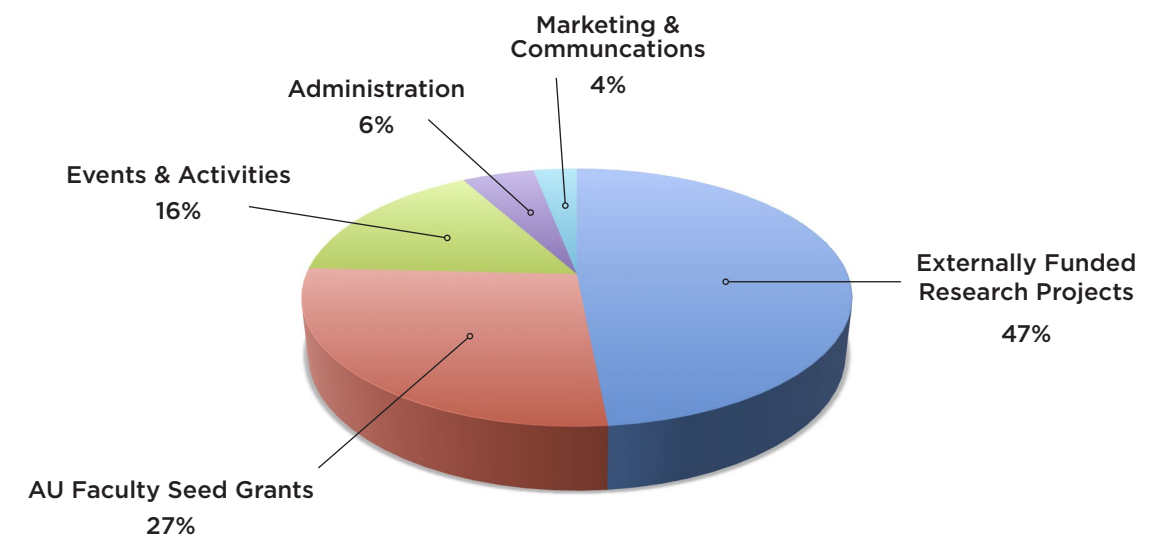
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