

UConn Scholarship On the City: 2018 - 2020

Celebrating innovative and important publications on urban and cities-related topics at the University of Connecticut

Featuring publications from SGCI
Faculty Affiliates

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THE SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL
CITIES INITIATIVE (SGCI)



UConn Scholarship on the City: 2018 – 2020

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The **Sustainable Global Cities Initiative** (SGCI) at UConn Hartford will enhance the research capacity and scholarship of UConn that engages critical challenges faced by cities in Connecticut and around the world by convening and expanding interdisciplinary research and projects. The SGCI aims to develop new models of democratic, healthy, and equitable urban life in partnership with public and private organizations as a natural evolution of UConn's civic outreach legacy.



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“This work is a valuable service to our society, as well as to our students, who learn alongside these faculty members and develop important career readiness skills as they see firsthand how research can act as social engagement. This report highlights the significant research contributions our faculty make to enhance the public good and exemplifies how UConn’s research mission serves as a driver in the state’s economic well-being. I am very pleased to share this scholarship by UConn researchers that focuses on the challenges facing urban communities in our state and beyond.”

Carl Lejuez

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, UConn

“UConn Scholarship on the City’ clearly reflects the achievement of the University of Connecticut’s mission to contribute diverse, cutting edge research and scholarship on topics of importance to cities and urban life. This report is a prime example of the importance of innovative research and scholarship, which can inform not only other scholars, but also policymakers and the public about issues that directly affect our communities.”

Radenka Maric

Vice President for Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, UConn

Professor in Sustainable Energy

“The diverse and wide ranging scholarship in this report demonstrates the critical importance of UConn research on cities and the people that shape urban life. With the majority of the world’s population living in cities, UConn’s faculty make vital contributions to examining problems and advancing sustainable solutions for life in urban spaces across the globe.”

Mark Overmyer-Velázquez

Campus Director, UConn Hartford

Professor of History

UConn Scholarship on the City: 2018 - 2020

August 2020

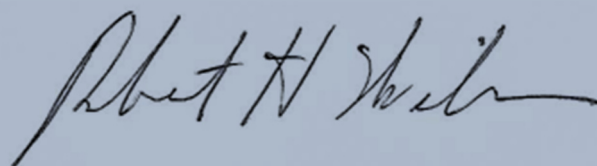
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In this inaugural survey of cities-related scholarship among its Faculty Affiliates, the Sustainable Global Cities Initiative (SGCI) at UConn has found abundant innovative and salient work which is both timely and impactful. Through a diverse array of research methods and disciplinary perspectives, our scholars define and clarify issues and assess strategies for addressing local and global urban challenges.

This report reviews selected recent publications of 41 SGCI Faculty Affiliates, representing 23 UConn departments and schools, organized into eight sub-categories exemplifying crucial questions and contemporary challenges faced in cities and towns. The most up-to-date information on our Faculty Affiliates' latest publications, projects, and other innovations can always be found in the Faculty Affiliate Directory on the SGCI website (cities.hartford.uconn.edu).

The essay first explores contextual factors affecting urban life, including race and violence, inclusion and security of immigrant populations, and poverty and responsiveness of governance systems to disadvantaged communities. Next, scholarship on the impact of ecological systems and land markets on cities is reviewed. The final section broadly addresses public policy issues in cities where research helps define policy problems, such as youth engagement, and assesses a range of policies and programs. The depth and breadth of this work, including ten publications based on non-US contexts, reflects research strengths that UConn can proudly celebrate—work that not only meets disciplinary standards but is socially engaged with findings relevant for social action and public policy.



Robert H. Wilson
Director, Sustainable Global Cities Initiative

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Race, Ideology, and Violence

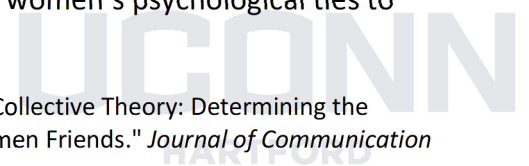
The issue of race presents an unresolved challenge in US Society, one that has been brought to the fore yet again by recent protests against police brutality. A host of disparities across racial and ethnic groups demonstrates the persistence of systemic racism, despite the recognizable effect of the Civil Rights movement and national, state, and local government policy that forbids discrimination. UConn scholars have recently examined race from the perspective of ideology, culture, demography, inequities, and governance, in the course of interrogating sources of disparities in cities.

Matthew Hughey (Sociology) examines the origins and impacts of “Souls of White Folk,” a provocative chapter in W. E. B. Du Bois’s recently republished *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil*, in “‘The Souls of White Folk’ (1920-2020): A Century of Peril and Prophecy.” Hughey studies the multiple dimensions of DuBois’ critique of “whiteness” and the relationship between whiteness and what DuBois calls the “darker world.” Writing at a time of transformation of consciousness between the racial dictatorship of slavery to the racial hegemony of Jim Crow, the emergence of whiteness provided justification for subjugation of the darker world, whether at home in the US or in the colonial wars of Africa. This re-examination by Hughey of Du Bois’s and other intellectuals from the early 20th century provides deep historical and ideological reflections relevant to the contemporary context of violence and race as well as historical attitudes toward the nation’s cities.

Hughey, Matthew W. “‘The Souls of White Folk’ (1920–2020): a Century of Peril and Prophecy.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 43.8 (2020): 1307-1332.

Shardé Davis (Communication) examines black culture in “The Strong Black Woman Collective Theory: Determining the Prosocial Functions of Strength Regulation in Groups of Black Women Friends.” Davis explores an image of the strong Black woman that can serve as a powerful agent in surviving an oppressive world and its application among peers. In an innovative research frame that utilizes Black women’s friendship groups, she finds the image is reappropriated within group dynamics to regulate strength among members of the group, to promote solidarity within the group, and to collectively confront external hostilities. While strength regulation and verbal derogation helps Black women psychologically address white aggressors, Davis concludes these dynamics do not consistently enhance women’s psychological ties to the friendship group.

Davis, Shardé M., and Tamara D. Afifi. “The Strong Black Woman Collective Theory: Determining the Prosocial Functions of Strength Regulation in Groups of Black Women Friends.” *Journal of Communication* 69.1 (2019): 1-25.



A common and disturbing theme of race relations in the US is violence against Blacks. In *Killing African Americans: Police and Vigilante Violence as a Racial Control Mechanism* (New York: Routledge, 2018), **Noel A. Cazenave** (Sociology) examines the pervasive, disproportionate, and persistent police and vigilante killings of African Americans that sustains systemic racism. The recent history of police violence, most recently in Georgia, Minneapolis, Louisville, and in other urban locales, has sparked protest and has strained racial relations to the breaking point. Cazenave argues that relevant constituencies – including students and scholars, Black activists, politicians, public policy analysts, concerned police officers, and other criminal justice professionals – must develop a better understanding of these atrocities and identify solutions from a progressive and informed African American perspective.

Cazenave, Noel A. *Killing African Americans: Police and Vigilante Violence as a Racial Control Mechanism*. Routledge, 2018.

In another piece of UConn scholarship addressing violence against Blacks, **Kenneth Foote** (Geography), utilizes a geographical approach and an analytical frame proposed by David Harvey in *Social Justice and the City* to examine Chicago police torture cases in “Police Torture in Chicago: Theorizing Violence and Social Justice in a Racialized City.” These torture cases have led to a decades-long struggle for justice and reparations waged by survivors, families, and activists. The examination of the spatiality of the torture and racialized practices of policing, housing, and employment reflects a process operating at multiple scales: Looking backward from the 1970s, the torture cases are an extension of a long history of racial violence rooted deeply in US history looking forward, the cases have clear parallels with contemporary events, including recent “blue-on-black” police killings and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. Theorizing violence within the larger debate over social justice in the contemporary US city has been used repeatedly in Chicago and other US cities, contributing to ongoing efforts to theorize race, space, and place and, specifically, to understanding the enforcement of social and spatial definitions of race and racial boundaries.

Hamilton, Aretina R., and Kenneth Foote. "Police Torture in Chicago: Theorizing Violence and Social Justice in a Racialized City." *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 108.2 (2018): 399-410.

Mary Bernstein (Sociology), in “Once in Parkland, a Year in Hartford, a Weekend in Chicago: Race and Resistance in the Gun Violence Prevention Movement,” explores the prevailing practice of ignoring firearm deaths by suicide as a form of gun violence which, in effect, leads to two distinct classifications: urban gun violence and mass shootings. As a result, gunshot deaths of black and brown bodies in urban settings, which constitute the majority of deaths by gun violence after suicide, are viewed as routine whereas gunshot deaths in suburban settings appear extraordinary and worthy of outrage. This research relies on ethnographic observation in a cultural pragmatics framework to compare protest vigils in urban communities, comprised predominantly of people of color (in Hartford, CT), with those in suburban areas (Parkland, FL and Sandy Hook, CT), mostly white, in order to uncover how the racialized processes of symbolic classification

is produced and why it must be challenged. While activists in these two camps are united in their commitment to end gun violence, the perception among the general population is one of two distinct class-based, racialized phenomena that has the effect of reinforcing structural racism.

Bernstein, Mary, Jordan McMillan, and Elizabeth Charash. "Once in Parkland, a Year in Hartford, a Weekend in Chicago: Race and Resistance in the Gun Violence Prevention Movement." *Sociological Forum*. Vol. 34. 2019.

Migration, Membership, and Security

Urban population dynamics are often significantly affected by migratory streams, both within a single country or between countries. Immigrant groups typically face significant challenges at their destinations, including membership status (e.g. temporary residents, permanent residents with or without citizenship), social inclusion and the associated political and civil rights. In cities in the US, the immigrant experience frequently includes segregated residency in disadvantaged urban communities. Four UConn scholars have recently addressed instances of North American immigration and security among immigrant groups more broadly, showing how immigrants both affect and are affected by their destination communities.

Mark Overmyer-Velázquez (History), as editor of *Construyendo el Gran México: La emigración a Estado Unidos* (a revised and expanded Spanish translation of his monograph *Beyond la Frontera*), provides a broad historical examination of the Mexico-US migratory trends and analyzes the experience within each country. US legislators have consistently and strategically constructed the Mexican migrant first as a temporary and then as an illegal, unassimilable racialized other, a permanent outsider used to fill the critical labor demands of an expanding industrialized economy. Mexico, always in an asymmetrical political and economic position vis-à-vis the United States, initially used a series of uncoordinated emigration policies to attempt to *prevent* the flight of its working citizens and later changed its broad legislative priorities to *facilitate* an out-migration that yielded economic gains through remittances and relief from unemployment and rapid population growth. To understand how Mexicans have become a dominant demographic presence and growing political and economic power in the contemporary United States, the multiple historical paths of past generations to *el Norte* must be considered.

Overmyer-Velázquez, Mark, ed. *Construyendo el Gran México: La Emigración a Estado Unidos*. Oxford University Press, 2020. [Spanish translation of *Beyond la Frontera: the History of Mexico-US Migration*. Oxford University Press, 2011.]



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In *Chino: Anti-Chinese Racism in Mexico, 1880-1940*, **Jason Oliver Chang** (History) examines the long neglected topic of *antichinismo*: the politics of racism against Chinese Mexicans that found potent expression in Mexico during the turn of the twentieth century. Mexican elites used *antichinismo* during the Mexican Revolution and thereafter to help build what they considered a modern Mexican nation. As Chang finds, anti-Chinese politics shared intimate bonds with a romantic ideology that surrounded the transformation of the mass indigenous peasantry into dignified *mestizos* and contributed to creating and sustaining mestizo nationalism, a project that dominated Mexico politically and socially for decades.

Chang, Jason Oliver. *Chino: Anti-Chinese Racism in Mexico, 1880-1940*. University of Illinois Press, 2017.

Charles Venator-Santiago (Political Science) provides a comprehensive history of the extension of US citizenship to Puerto Ricans since 1898, the year the Puerto Rico was annexed by the US, in *Hostages of Empire: A Short History of the Extension of U.S. Citizenship to Puerto Rico, 1898 to the Present*. More than a century after the Jones Act of 1917, which collectively naturalized the residents of Puerto Rico in order to conscript them as soldiers to fight in World War I, citizenship status remains misunderstood by most mainland residents. The ambiguous definition of membership (especially around citizenship) results in part from Puerto Rico's designation as an unincorporated territory, thereby giving Congress power to govern it selectively. Given the ten subsequent citizenship laws and lack of clarification rulings by the Supreme Court, Puerto Rican citizenship continues to create troubling uncertainty inside Puerto Rico.

Venator-Santiago, Charles R. *Hostages of Empire: A Short History of the Extension of U.S. Citizenship to Puerto Rico, 1898 to the Present*. CreateSpace, 2018.

In "Migration, Migrants, and Human Security," **Bandana Purkayastha** (Sociology) examines security among international migrants. Using nuanced definitions of different types of migrants – including internally displaced persons, refugees, and trafficked persons – and multiple temporal patterns, from seasonal, temporary to and long-term migration, Purkayastha finds human security issues of various groups significantly differ. Drawing upon scholarship on political-economic processes linking the Global South and North, as well as intersectionality and human rights, Purkayastha argues that an understanding of specific groups must move beyond the centrality of the nation-state. A more appropriate framework is the "glocal", the intersecting of the global-national-local, to understand the full range of issues surrounding migration, especially human security.

Purkayastha, Bandana. "Migration, Migrants, and Human Security." *Current Sociology* 66.2 (2018): 167-191.



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Development: Governance, Poverty, and Politics

Countries in the Global South face a multitude of pressing issues, reflecting in no small part adverse impacts of rapid urbanization. Unique institutional characteristics and lower levels of development affect disparities in income, health status, education, inadequate housing, unhealthy environments, and other development outcomes. Unfortunately, many low-income urban communities in the US are subject to similar challenges. As several UConn scholars have recently argued, the fragility of local institutions and ineffective governance, resulting from the lack of legitimacy and credibility of government bestowed by citizens and non-governmental actors, impedes development efforts.

In his latest publication, **Nishith Prakash** (Economics) tackles the question “Do Criminally Accused Politicians Affect Economic Outcomes? Evidence from India.” The paper finds that electing criminally accused politicians to state legislative assemblies in India affects the economic performance of their constituencies. In sophisticated modeling, with creative measures (e.g. using the intensity of night-time lights as measure of economic activity), the study finds that narrowly electing a criminally accused politician lowers the growth of the intensity of night-time lights, at the constituency level, by about 24 percentage points (approximately 2.4 percentage point lower GDP growth), with the negative impact being more pronounced for legislators with more serious charges and other personal characteristics. The effect is stronger in the less developed and more corrupt states.

Prakash, Nishith, Marc Rockmore, and Yogesh Uppal. "Do criminally accused politicians affect economic outcomes? Evidence from India." *Journal of Development Economics* 141 (2019): 102370.

Nathan Fiala (Agriculture and Resources Economics) assesses the effect of a cash grant program on employment and earnings in “The Long-term Impacts of Grants on Poverty: 9-year Evidence from Uganda’s Youth Opportunities Program.” An experimental evaluation method was adopted to assess a grants-based program for youth education and training. While the effect of the \$400/person grant to thousands of youth was found to have significant short-term effects on employment and earnings, these dissipated over the 9 year time frame resulting in convergence with the control group. Although having little effect on mortality, fertility, family health, and education, the grants had lasting impacts on durable asset stocks and skilled work, important findings that help inform poverty alleviation strategies.

Blattman, Christopher, Nathan Fiala, and Sebastian Martinez. *The long term impacts of grants on poverty: 9-year evidence from Uganda's Youth Opportunities Program*. No. w24999. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2018.

In “Political Trust, Risk Preferences, and Policy Support: Evidence from Survey Experiments in China” **Meina Cai** (Political Science) examines how political trust across local government levels and risk preferences affected individual support for land-taking compensation policies. China represents an extreme case of land expropriated to meet the demands of rapid urbanization, a process that generated anger and protest in affected rural populations. Applied through a survey, the authors applied a two lottery choice experiment with varying monetary levels and forms of payment to assess support of villagers for alternative compensation systems. Political trust in county-level government positively correlated with individual support to pension payments while political distrust in the village collective induced villagers to favor the one-time payment to yearly dividends. In other words, the effectiveness of compensation policies to quell rural anger must recognize differing levels of trust across levels in the decentralized multi-level local government structure.

Cai, Meina, Pengfei Liu, and Hui Wang. "Political trust, risk preferences, and policy support: A study of land-dispossessed villagers in China." *World Development* 125 (2020): 104687.

Robert H. Wilson (Public Policy) identifies the most likely public policy challenges and agenda items that policymakers will confront in Latin America 10 years hence in “Latin America’s Future Policy Challenges: A Ten Year Time Horizon.” Based on key informant interviews, many of Latin America’s modern-day challenges, including declining GDP per capita, aging of the population, rising poverty, poor government performance, and deterioration of governance systems and political parties will continue to be salient within the public-policy agenda. But new issues, including effects of climate, threat of pandemics, failure of regional collaboration, rising influence of China, and challenges related to large cities in the region – densification, public transportation, land market interventions, sustainability and spatial inequality – will likely come to the foreground.

Ward, Peter M., and Robert H. Wilson. "Latin America’s Future Public Policy Challenges: A Ten-year Time Horizon." *Latin American Policy* 9.2 (2018): 183-207.

What is the relationship between local communities and general economic conditions through employment opportunities? **Louise Simmons** (Social Work) engages this question in “Community-Labor Partnerships for Social and Economic Justice.” Through observing the unique and deleterious effects of increasing wage and wealth inequality on low-income urban communities, Simmons identifies the historical antecedents of the current context. Deindustrialization, job loss, and white flight of the mid to late 20th century have disproportionately affected communities of color, even when the overall urban area may be experiencing economic revitalization. Demands for economic justice have emerged and social movements based on community-labor partnerships have developed in many metropolitan areas and are becoming a key element of community organizing efforts in the United States.

Cnaan, Ram A., and Carl Milofsky, eds. *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations in the 21st Century*. Springer, 2018.

Culture and Communications

Societies rely on complex mechanisms for creating and changing cultural practices. This process of change, explored in recent work by two UConn scholars, is constantly contested; furthermore, the high densities of diverse and competing groups in cities ensures heightened competition for influence. The extraordinary advance of technology, especially communications, opens new arenas of cultural contestation.

Alexis Boylan (Art and Art History), in *Furious Feminisms: Alternate Routes on Mad Max: Fury Road*, reflects on the perceptions of fans and foes of *Mad Max: Fury Road*'s feminist credentials and asks whether or not anything truly feminist or radical happens on the screen. This vision of the contested dystopic landscape of the twenty-first century provides a fertile ground for dialogue among the authors. From backgrounds in art history, American literature, disability studies, and sociology, the authors ask what is possible, desirable, or damaging in theorizing feminism.

Boylan, Alexis L., et al. *Furious Feminisms: Alternate Routes on Mad Max: Fury Road*. University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

As Internet users increasingly use social media for gathering news, verification of content becomes more crucial. **Anne Oeldorf-Hirsch** (Communication) explores this concern in "The Ineffectiveness of Fact-checking Labels on News Memes and Articles." Experiments were constructed to test the effects of fact-checking labels (confirmed vs. disputed) by source (peer vs. third-party) on credibility and virality of news posted on social media. The study found that while fact-checking labels do not have a beneficial effect on credibility perceptions of individual news posts, their presence does seem to increase judgments of the site's quality overall. As contestation of contemporary reality grows, this study presents key implications for theory and design in fact-checking and news consumption on social media.

Oeldorf-Hirsch, Anne, et al. "The ineffectiveness of fact-checking labels on news memes and articles." *Mass Communication and Society* (2020): 1-23.

Weather Events, Pollution, and Heat: Impacts on Urban Settings

Social-ecological systems are becoming increasingly recognized a key context for quality of life and sustainability in cities. The increasing incidence of severe weather events, for example, affect ecological systems and urban environments. Relying on scholars from both natural and social sciences, the interaction of natural and human systems in urban settings has heightened attention devoted to sustainability and resilience. UConn scholars – and higher education more broadly – are extending their research and teaching agendas into this emerging field.

Michael Willig (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) assesses the impact of the complex ecological interactions resulting from climate events in “Resistance, resilience, and vulnerability of social-ecological systems to hurricanes in Puerto Rico.” Despite patterns of resistance and resilience in Puerto Rico’s natural ecosystems, anthropogenic effects (e.g. coral bleaching, sedimentation) dominate the long-term condition of marine systems, resulting in the emergence of novel marine ecosystems with potential implications on coastal communities. A key characteristic of these ecosystems is their long-term loss of benefits and resilience coupled with declining biodiversity and loss of functional redundancy, signaling increased vulnerability to subsequent hurricanes. The lack of coral reef ecosystems’ short-term recovery from increasingly common disturbances may have irreversible long-term consequences for coastal ecological systems and community livelihoods. Finding effective methods to link measurements of storm intensity to the diverse components of tropical social-ecological systems remains a high priority despite ongoing challenges.

Willig, Michael, J.K. Zimmerman, and E. Hernandez-Delgado. “Resistance, resilience, and vulnerability of social-ecological systems to hurricanes in Puerto Rico.” *Ecosphere* (forthcoming).

Sohyun Park (Landscape Architecture), in a study of air pollution, “A Pilot Study on the Relationship between Urban Green Spaces and Fine Particulate Matter”, identifies the various factors, and their interactions, that influence city-wide pollution levels in the six largest cities in Texas. A hierarchical linear model incorporated three groups of variables: 1) urban components; 2) green space components (coverage, percentage, connectivity, and shape); and 3) meteorological factors. The study found that city-wide particulate pollution was positively associated with temperature, city land area, population, population density, and shape complexity, and negatively associated with wind speed, amount of green spaces, tree canopy, and connectivity of green spaces. This study indicates that both the quantity and spatial configuration of green spaces can play an important role in managing fine particulate matter in large cities, an important finding for enhancing healthy urban environments.

Park, Sohyun, Seungman Kim, and Jaehoon Lee. "A Pilot Study on the Relationship between Urban Green Spaces and Fine Particulate Matter." *International Journal of Geospatial and Environmental Research* 7.1 (2020): 3.

Mariana Fragomeni (Landscape Architecture), in "A Collaborative Approach to Heat Response Planning: A Case Study to Understand the Integration of Urban Climatology and Land-use Planning" (with S. Bernardes, and J. M. Shepherd, and R.G. Rivero, *Urban Climate* 2020), examines heat events, an emerging challenge in cities. While the increasing temperature of the atmosphere is a global phenomenon, severe heat events have especially unique and deadly effects in cities. "Heat islands" of higher temperatures are found in the built-up areas of cities in contrast with lower temperatures of nearby rural areas. The built environment itself can hold heat and some patterns of streets and buildings impede mitigation from air circulation. The authors argue that there is a need for collaboration between urban climatology and city planning. The study demonstrates a form of collaboration supported by coproduction and geodesign frameworks, suggesting that the application of heat data relies on visualization and depends upon its alignment with existing planning practices.

Fragomeni, Mariana BA, et al. "A collaborative approach to heat response planning: A case study to understand the integration of urban climatology and land-use planning." *Urban Climate* 33 (2020): 100653.

James O'Donnell (Marine Sciences), in "Institutionalizing Resilience in US Universities: Prospects, Opportunities, and Models," reflects on the role of universities in supporting the research and training needs in this emerging field. In the US, a largely region-specific approach to climate change challenges is being adopted. For example, in Hampton Roads, New Orleans, and coastal Connecticut, the impacts of climate change tend to be addressed as they become locally evident rather than as part of a larger anticipatory national plan. This regional approach provides universities a unique role in affecting the challenges of a changing climate. Universities can be knowledge brokers positioned outside or across political, jurisdictional, and agency boundaries (localities, states, and federal) that often are problematic for regional planning and action. Universities, the authors argue, have the capacity to translate knowledge from local cases to politically and culturally contextualized states to global generalizations.

James O'Donnell, with M. Foster, M. Luckenbach, E. Andrews, E. Steinhilber, J. Wells, and M. Davis, "Institutionalizing Resilience in US Universities: Prospects, Opportunities, and Models." *Marine Technology Society Journal* 52.2 (2018): 106-110.

Urban Land: Sustainability and Valuation

The dynamics of urban growth can be examined through the use and value of land resources. Market and demographic forces and policy systems, especially legal structures such as land use zoning, all affect land use. Construction on urban land, generally referred to as the “built environment,” holds implications for social interaction and resource sustainability. Given the density of uses and spatial interactions generated by land use patterns, external effects of the activities on a particular plot of land will affect the value of adjacent land (called “externalities” by urban economists). The operations of urban land markets are crucial for understanding urban dynamics. This research tends to be applied and locale-specific, considering local circumstances and practices. UConn scholars have recently published important research that contributes to the understanding of these complex and interdependent dynamics.

Sara Bronin (Law) has extensively investigated land use zoning power of local governments in past research. In “Comprehensive Rezonings” and “Zoning for Families,” she argues that zoning laws have been revised in an incremental, if not ad hoc, fashion since their introduction in the US in the first part of the twentieth century and are now in need of comprehensive revision to comport with new community priorities such as equity, sustainability, and vibrancy. She identifies recent changes in Hartford’s zoning code to achieve a set of goals as a model. One concern in particular is changing family structure and increased housing for unrelated adults, housing types which were not considered in the definition of “family” used in prevailing zoning laws. She argues that local governments should revise the zoning codes to allow for functional families thereby recognizing and make legitimate increasingly diverse living arrangements and preferences.

Bronin, Sara C. "Comprehensive Rezonings." *BYU L. Rev.* (2019): 725, and Bronin, Sara C. "Zoning for Families." *Ind. Law Journal.* 95 (2020): 1.

Actions to achieve sustainability goals invariably require new types of built infrastructure and, as a form of land use, these investments may have external effects on land values.

Carol Atkinson-Palombo (Geography), in "Wind turbines, Amenities and Disamenities: A study of Home Value Impacts in Densely Populated Massachusetts," investigates the effect of wind turbines on home values using data from densely population communities and a set of wind turbines placed in these communities. Some argue that this green energy innovation can result in adverse effects on nearby properties. The study identified negative features of turbines (e.g. transmission lines) as well as positive features (e.g. more open space), generally accorded with previous studies, but did not find a net effect of turbines in the sample's communities. In addition, no effect on the rate of home sales near wind turbines was found. The paper concludes that the introduction of this form of

built infrastructure had no net effect of land use – a significant finding for the siting of green infrastructure.

Hoen, B. and C. Atkinson-Palombo. "Wind Turbines, Amenities and Disamenities: A study of home value impacts in densely populated Massachusetts." *Journal of Real Estate Research* 38.4 (2017): 473-504.

Cindy Zhang (Geography), in "Analyzing Horizontal and Vertical Urban Expansions in Three East Asian Megacities with the SS-coMCRF Model," proposes an innovative method for estimating expansion of megacities using a Markov chain methodology and Landsat images. The study of vertical urban growth, as measured by the area of mid-rise or taller buildings (MTBs), potentially offers new insights into the urban expansion of megacities not available in previous studies exclusively focused on horizontal expansion. Using data from Beijing, Seoul, and Tokyo over several decades, this study finds significant vertical expansion in all cities after an initial horizontal expansion. The growth patterns in each, however, were uniquely affected by local context – namely geography, population, and development policies. This innovative estimation method and these findings concerning the built environment in megacities will prove useful to both urban planners and property developers.

Zhang, Weixing, Weidong Li, Chuanrong Zhang, Dean M. Hanink, Yueyan Liu, and Ruiting Zhai. "Analyzing horizontal and vertical urban expansions in three East Asian megacities with the SS-coMCRF model." *Landscape and Urban Planning* 177 (2018): 114-127.

As noted above, the built environment affects land values and, thereby, property tax revenues, an important source of local government revenue in most countries. But since property transactions of individual properties are not frequent, a means to estimate values is crucial for fairness in local property tax systems. **Jeff Cohen** (Finance), in "Time-Geographically Weighted Regressions and Residential Property Value Assessment," proposes a new method for estimating accurate and equitable property value assessments. This paper introduces a time dimension to the Geographically Weighted Regressions (GWR) framework, and thereby considers sales that are close in time and space to the designated land parcel in generating assessed values. The new method was applied to the sales of residential properties over the course of two decades in 50 municipalities in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and performed better than traditional methods without a time variable.

Cohen, Jeffrey P., Cletus C. Coughlin, and Jeffrey Zabel. "Time-Geographically Weighted Regressions and Residential Property Value Assessment." *The Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics* 60.1 (2020): 134-154.

The Youth Challenge

Youth development, a well-established field, is increasingly concerned with urban contexts: youth from disadvantaged backgrounds residing in situations of struggle; social and policy structures of limited support; and evidence of the decline in intergenerational mobility for urban youth (i.e., social prospects for youth being increasingly determined by zip codes of place of residence). UConn scholars are helping to understand and engage these issues, taking crucial steps needed to design effective strategies for addressing youth development.

Beth Russell (Human Development and Family Sciences), in “Emotion Regulation Outcomes and Preliminary Feasibility Evidence from a Mindfulness intervention for Adolescent Substance Abuse,” explores mental health struggles in adolescent substance abuse disorder (SUD). Mindfulness-based intervention – defined as developing skills to reduce perceived stress or feeling of crisis and a sense of agency and self-regulatory efficacy – was found to improve distress tolerance in a small group study. In a randomized experiment with a comparison group of students without the SUD diagnosis, improvement on students’ depression symptomology and on two measures of impulsivity were found. These results hold significant implications for dosage and approach of mindfulness intervention for youth.

Russell, Beth S., Morica Hutchison, and Alaina Fusco. "Emotion regulation outcomes and preliminary feasibility evidence from a mindfulness intervention for adolescent substance use." *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse* 28.1 (2019): 21-31.

Focusing on the views of teenagers, **Edith Barrett** (Public Policy), in “Defining their Right to the City: Perspectives from Lower-Income Youth”, uses an interview-based method to construct a youth-informed vision of a just city. Life in the city faced by youth has been affected by declines in local government spending on public pools and recreation centers, curfews, restrictions on places where youth can congregate, and frequent negative interactions with law enforcement. In this seemingly hostile environment, teenagers nevertheless claim their right to the city, including not only the fair use of physical spaces but also a place that facilitates their maturing into healthy, well-educated, and financially secure adults.

Barrett, Edith J. "Defining Their Right to the City: Perspectives from Lower-Income Youth." *Urban Affairs Review* (2019): 1078087419892081.

Steven Ross (Economics), in “Partners in Crime” (with S.B. Billings and D.J. Deming, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11:1 2019), examines explanations of criminal activity across neighborhoods over time. The study finds direct evidence of social spillovers (i.e. social interactions) in crime using an innovative research method that analyzes peer exposure and crime agglomeration data from areas on both sides of a

newly-drawn school boundary in a North Carolina neighborhood. In other words, grouping more disadvantaged students in the same school increases total crime. Additionally, these youths are more likely to be arrested for committing crimes together, i.e. to be "partners in crime." In sum, the study found that neighborhood and school segregation increased crime by fostering social interactions between at-risk youth, reflecting and reaffirming the social costs of associated re-segregation in the nation's schools.

Billings, Stephen B., David J. Deming, and Stephen L. Ross. "Partners in crime." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11.1 (2019): 126-50.

Enhancing The Public Good: Defining Issues and Evaluating Programs

As a historical legacy of Great Society programs that mandated an assessment of the effectiveness of federal policies designed for the unique circumstances in US cities, the field of policy research has become increasingly evidenced-based. Defining policy problems, elaborating and evaluating programs, and ensuring transparency concerning public revenues and budgets all rely on data analysis as one form of evidence. Recent scholarship by UConn professors shows that applied policy research capacity that addresses unique issues in cities is well represented in many different areas at the University.

The study of **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** uses extensive research and communications technology to improve efficiency in early warning systems and deployment of resources. Cities and communities with high population densities have always presented unique challenges in this area which are exacerbated with increased frequency of climate events.

What impact might social media have on EMS communication? **Kenneth Lachlan** (Communication), in "A Little Goes a Long Way: Serial Transmission of Twitter Content Associated with Hurricane Irma and Implications for Crisis Communication," analyzes "serial transmission": message attributes that drive retweeting during crises and disasters. Analyzing 3.5 million tweets in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, this study finds informational tweets containing specific imperative language and graphic elements to be prominent. Given that the likelihood of serial transmission was unrelated to follower count or account verification, the study provides important insights for improving the effectiveness of communication during management of emergencies.

Lachlan, Kenneth A., et al. "A little goes a long way: Serial transmission of Twitter content associated with Hurricane Irma and implications for crisis communication." *Journal of Strategic Innovation and Sustainability* 14.1 (2019): 16-26.

Evacuation of high density buildings due to a fire or natural disaster is a critical concern in urban EMS services. **Kerry Marsh** (Psychology), in “The Effects of Information and Hazard on Evacuee Behavior in Virtual Reality,” studies a well-known challenge: when faced with any unexpected slowdown in evacuation, such as unseen funneling or blockage, evacuees’ impatience and urgency is accentuated, creating an even more dangerous situation. This research adopted a social-ecological perception-based approach through a virtual reality (VR) simulation to test whether providing information can lessen the danger during rapid evacuation. The study found that providing additional information about an obstacle (e.g. presence of visible fire or smoke) decreased total evacuation time, even though it did not significantly affect evacuees’ choice of exit. Confirming that targeted information may further reduce anxiety and evacuation time, this study also demonstrates the usefulness of VR simulations in assessing individual and psychological factors in evacuations.

Tucker, A., K. L. Marsh, T. Gifford, X. Lu, P. B. Luh, and R. S. Astur. "The effects of information and hazard on evacuee behavior in virtual reality." *Fire Safety Journal* 99 (2018): 1-11.

Education Policy continues to be identified as crucial field for overcoming persistent disparities in intergenerational outcomes and racial/ethnic conflict. In the US, public schools have re-segregated to levels not seen in decades even as demographic composition now involves a greater range of racial/ethnic groups. This field of study, which encompasses a number of recent publications from UConn scholars, receives significant attention from several disciplines in the US and abroad.

Tamika La Salle (Educational Psychology), in “Racial Mismatch among Minoritized Students and White Teachers: Implications and Recommendations for Moving Forward (with C. Wang, C. Wu, and J. Rocha Neves, *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* 2019), examines the relationship between student-teacher racial composition and perceptions of school climate, specially the impact of Whiteness on the educational outcomes of minoritized students. Noting that while the student body of American public schools has become very diverse, the teacher workforce remains primarily White (80%). In the sample studied, more than 90 percent of the minoritized students were being educated by a majority White teaching staff. Among White students, perceptions of cultural acceptance and connectedness increased with the number of White teachers but for minoritized students, perceptions of school climate increased only as the number of minoritized students increased. The study concludes with recommendations for creating more equitable learning environments for minoritized students and reducing teacher bias.

La Salle, Tamika P., et al. "Racial mismatch among minoritized students and white teachers: Implications and recommendations for moving forward." *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* 30.3 (2020): 314-343.

Jorge Agüero (Economics), in “The Intergenerational Transmission of Schooling Among the Education-Rationed”, explores the intergenerational transmission of schooling, specifically the unique effects of parents on student attainment. Following the end of apartheid-style policies in Zimbabwe, the 1980 education reforms quickly tripled the transition rate to secondary schools, providing scholars with a unique data set, with exogenous variation in school attainment due to the compulsory nature of the reforms, to explore these effects. Using sophisticated research methodology (a fuzzy regression discontinuity design), the study found increased child attainment due to the schooling of the mother and father-to-child spillovers, with the size of the impact mediated by marriage and labor markets. The findings regarding the transmission pathways of parents’ schooling opens up new avenues for refining educational reforms.

Agüero, Jorge M., and Maithili Ramachandran. "The intergenerational transmission of schooling among the education-rationed." *Journal of Human Resources* 55.2 (2020): 504-538.

Among the more ambitious federal education policies, “No Child left Behind” intended to improve educational opportunities through expanded school choice in the US. **Eric Brunner** (Public Policy), in “Gentrification and Failing Schools: The Unintended Consequences of School Choice under NCLB” (with Steve Billings and Steve Ross *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 100:1 65-77 2018), adopts an innovative research design to assess the effect of NCLB policy on housing markets and residential mobility. Hypothesizing that school choice policy might have unanticipated consequences, the authors utilize the priority given to students in a failing attendance zone (defined by a measure of schools in a zone failing to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress in Charlotte, NC) for lotteries to gain access to oversubscribed schools in order to assess the effect a failing zone might actually have on the attractiveness of the zone. The study finds that housing prices, homebuyer income, and the probability of attending a non-assigned school increase in the highest quality neighborhoods within failing attendance zones, a result driven largely by the behavior of new residents.

Billings, Stephen B., Eric J. Brunner, and Stephen L. Ross. "Gentrification and failing schools: The unintended consequences of school choice under NCLB." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 100.1 (2018): 65-77.

Adequate funding for public education and the role of citizens in approving funding are critical factors in the provision of education services. **Mark Robbins** (Public Policy), in “Property Tax Information and Support for School Bond Referenda: Experimental Evidence,” conducted an experiment to assess the effect of additional information on support for school bond referenda. Treatment conditions generated variation in the way information on the potential implications of property tax increases were described to voters. The study found a persistent negative effect of additional information, specifically property tax wording, on the probability of support (between 6 and 9 percentage points) for school bond referenda across all treatments. The effects were consistent across different populations with only those pertaining to the group with high levels of education showing no statistically significant effect of the treatment on support

for school referenda. While providing wording connecting property taxes to bond referenda is consistent with government transparency efforts, such wording might not improve the accuracy of information conveyed since the tax levy depends on a myriad of factors, only one of which is debt service on bonds.

Brunner, Eric J., Mark D. Robbins, and Bill Simonsen. "Property Tax Information and Support for School Bond Referenda: Experimental Evidence." *Public Administration Review* (2020).

Food Policy and Healthcare: Measures of quality of life and health status have become increasingly disparate among subgroups of the US population. UConn has a significant group of scholars conducting research in this field. Recent contributions focus on food insecurity and food policy in urban contexts, topics that recognize the relationship between agricultural policy and public health. An often-overlooked sector of the health industry, until the recent coronavirus crisis, has been that of caregivers, where one finds a gendered, racialized, and overwhelmingly non-native born workforce.

Kristen Cooksey Stowers (Allied Health Sciences), in "Client Preferences for Nutrition Interventions in Food Pantries" (with KS Martin, and M Schwartz, *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition* 14:1-2 2019), investigated food pantry clients' support for interventions designed to promote healthy food choices in pantries, choices of specific items, and their monthly food acquisitions. In a racially and ethnically diverse sample, clients demonstrated fairly high overall support for strategies to promote nutritional food, but Black clients were significantly more supportive of nutrition interventions than clients belonging to other ethnic and racial groups. Study participants from all ethnic and racial subgroups rated nutrition as the most important factor when selecting pantry items, and expressed concern with running out of meat, dairy, and produce. Clients reported more frequency of visits to pantries: about the same as those to a grocery store, and more frequently than visits to dollar stores, supercenters, and convenience stores. In conclusion, food pantry clients appeared very concerned with the nutritional quality of the food options in pantries and with making healthier food choices.

Stowers, Kristen Cooksey, et al. "Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP): changes to inventory in six food pantries over one year." *Journal of Public Health* (2020): 1-9.

Peter Chen (Geography) extends methods of analysis for food access to account for the role of operating hours of retailers on access in "Measuring space-time access to food retailers: A case of temporal access disparity in Franklin County, Ohio" (with J. Clark J *The Professional Geographer*, 68:2 175–88 2016) This study complements the spatial dimension of access measures by incorporating time (of day) as a new constraint on food access. Using multiple measures of access to data Columbus, Ohio, the study finds that food access disparity among low-socioeconomic-status neighborhoods in Columbus is less related to a disadvantage of *spatial* access than to limited *temporal* access. With this more complete understanding of food access, community advocates, local

governments, and other stakeholders can design more effective strategies to resolve this pressing challenge.

Chen, Xiang, and Jill Clark. "Measuring space–time access to food retailers: a case of temporal access disparity in Franklin County, Ohio." *The Professional Geographer* 68.2 (2016): 175-188.

Andrew Deener (Sociology), in *The Problem with Feeding Cities: The Social Transformation of Infrastructure, Abundance, and Inequality in America*, offers a sociological and historical examination of the US food system, explaining how the system transformed from feeding cities to feeding regions to feeding an entire nation, which in turn, shifted the system’s underlying logic from fulfilling basic needs to satisfying profit margins. But this system can fail communities, he argues, and food-access issues result from infrastructural disruptions stemming from the very formation of markets and distribution systems that arose in the context of urbanization. Relying on archival research, interviews with food industry stakeholders, and field research in distribution facilities, Deener profiles farmers, supermarket executives, logistics experts, food bank employees, and public health advocates who are part of this complex system.

Deener, Andrew. *The Problem with Feeding Cities: The Social Transformation of Infrastructure, Abundance, and Inequality in America*. University of Chicago Press, 2020.

In “Primer on US Food and Nutrition Policy and Public Health,” **Marlene Schwartz** (Human Development and Family Sciences) explores how agriculture policy and sustainability have direct impacts on nutrition and health outcomes with a focus on food insecurity in the United States. The federal farm bill represents the primary vehicle for US agriculture policy and, therefore, the opportunity to advocate for incentives to make agriculture more sustainable, improve nutrition, and meet public health goals. The Farm Bill of 2018 made some progress on provisions to improve nutrition, diversify production, and make it more sustainable, but major reform will require new political coalitions according to Schwartz and her colleagues. The authors discuss the successful engagement of scholars in the 2015 debate on sustainability in nutrition guidelines, drawing upon the interdependence of agriculture and nutrition. That experience highlights the opportunities for public health and sustainable agriculture scholars to coalesce and advocate for reforms needed to align more closely agricultural policy with the health needs of citizens and the environment.

Miller, D. L., M. B. Schwartz, and K. D. Brownell. "Primer on US Food and Nutrition Policy and Public Health: Food Sustainability." *American Journal of Public Health* 109.7 (2019): 986-988.

The US health sector faces challenges and scrutiny, recently accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, concerning the effectiveness of and access to services. **Wizdom Powell** (Health Disparities Institute), in “Medical Mistrust, Racism, and Delays in Preventive Health Screening Among African-American Men” examines a persistent racial disparity in health service access and utilization. This research examines patterns among African-American men who delay preventive health screening. Previous studies rarely accounted for factors other than medical mistrust that increased African-American men's

preventive health screening delays, such as everyday racism and perceived racism in healthcare. The authors, using regression modeling with cross-sectional data of 600 African American men in four US regions (2003-2009), found that African-American men were likely to delay blood pressure screenings because of higher medical mistrust, routine checkups because of frequent everyday racism, and cholesterol screening because of higher levels of perceived racism. The study persuasively argues that increasing preventive health screening among African-American men requires that medical mistrust and racism in and outside healthcare institutions be addressed.

Powell, Wizdom, et al. "Medical mistrust, racism, and delays in preventive health screening among African-American men." *Behavioral Medicine* 45.2 (2019): 102-117.

As health issues expand in American society, particularly with the growing elderly population, health care labor markets are evolving. **Kim Price-Glynn** (Sociology), in "Vulnerable Caregivers: A Comparison of Direct Care Workers' Health Risks in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Private Homes," explores the risks that direct care health workers encounter in two work settings (institutional or facility-based vs home care) according to their demographic composition and the gendered, raced, and citizenship-based expressions of work roles. The labor force in this occupation is highly feminized, racialized, and non-native to the United States. Using quantitative intersectional methods and two large national data sets, the study found that the strongest predictor of a worker's risk was determined by workplace context. Physical injuries affect about half of facility-based workers compared to less than 10% for home-based workers, but on other measures home-based workers scored better. Given recent developments with COVID-19 rates in nursing homes, this study will be crucial in developing better workplace policies and training for this workforce.

Price-Glynn, Kim, and Carter Rakovski. "Vulnerable Caregivers: A Comparison of Direct Care Workers' Health Risks in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Private Homes." *Underserved and Socially Disadvantaged Groups and Linkages with Health and Health Care Differentials (Research in the Sociology of Health Care* 37 (2019): 225-238.

Policy Evaluation: Development and Sustainability: UConn scholarship not only contributes to defining public policy challenges, but also takes the form of policy and program evaluation. This type of research is generally applied, examining a particular program of governmental function, but variation can be generated by assessing the effectiveness of a program present in multiple local or state governments.

Mohamad Alkadry (Public Policy), in "The Power of Public Procurement: Social equity and sustainability as externalities and as deliberate policy tools" (with E. Trammell and A.M. Dimand *International Journal of Procurement Management* 12:3 2019), explores the political demands on local governments for sustainability and equity in service delivery. This study examines the degree of responsiveness of local governments, as

embedded in procurement practices, to these emerging demands. Using survey data from 207 US regional and local governments, the study finds that political leanings, degree of professionalization, and access to decision makers are the most significant predictors of the adoption of sustainable procurement practices. The authors conclude that ethical spending of public dollars to achieve sustainable outcomes is more likely to be influenced by the political leanings of the local population than by the capacity of the local government to institute and enforce sustainable practices.

Alkadry, Mohamad G., Evelyn Trammell, and Ana-Maria Dimand. "The power of public procurement: social equity and sustainability as externalities and as deliberate policy tools." *International Journal of Procurement Management* 12.3 (2019): 336-362.

Mary Donegan (Urban and Community Studies), in "Striking a balance: A national assessment of economic development incentives," examines the increased competition among local government for new industrial plants and corporate relocations. Land valuation could be significant for attracting investment and have a subsequent effect on land values if successful. While government incentives promise jobs and tax revenue, scholars and practitioners often criticize their high cost and limited accountability. Through a comparison of matched establishments, the authors assess the impacts of governmental incentive-granting strategy on incentive performance, including the effectiveness of these grants on smaller firms. The study found that incentivized firms fail to create more jobs than matched controls, thereby casting doubt on claims that job creation would not occur without government incentives. The study examines the overall approach of select states by determining level of expenditures across strategies and finds that state spending will be more effective if a balance is struck between recruiting industry and supporting "homegrown" businesses and technology.

Donegan, Mary, T. William Lester, and Nichola Lowe. "Striking a balance: A national assessment of economic development incentives." *Urban Affairs Review* (2019).



Engaged Urban Research at UConn

It is clear that UConn has robust research capacity for examining cities and towns, in multiple disciplines, and that this capacity is being fully engaged in innovative ways to meet today's challenges. The books, articles, and projects featured in this essay represent only a sample of the cumulative scholarship accomplished by the Faculty Affiliates of the Sustainable Global Cities Initiative. (A comprehensive and updated list of cities-related research and academic achievements can be found at the Faculty Affiliate Directory on the SGCI website). This scholarship not only meets the norms and standards of an R1 Research University but simultaneously meets the demands of a publicly engaged university in a highly urbanized state and world.

This is the first of what will become a series of annual reports highlighting recent UConn publications on city-related issues. The SGCI is proud to promote these pieces of exemplary scholarship and draw as much well-deserved attention as possible to these engaged research efforts by supporting the expansion of research capacity, forming interdisciplinary research groups, and implementing a messaging strategy for internal and external constituencies.

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