

## Urban Geography Research Group Conference 2016: Frontiers of Critical Urbanism

A two-day conference and open discussion organised by the RGS-IBG Urban Geography Research Group.

Dates: 7-8 April 2016 (half day Thursday and all day Friday)

Location: Cardiff University, School of Planning and Geography

### 2nd Call for Contributions

This year's UGRG Conference will explore critical urbanism in relation to three key areas of concern: (1) consumption; (2) resilience; and (3) austerity. Critical urbanism may be defined by Brenner et al (2009: 179) as concerned with:

(a) analysis of the systemic, yet historically specific, intersections between capitalism and urbanization processes; (b) the changing balance of social forces, power relations, socio-spatial inequalities and political-institutional arrangements that shape, and are in turn shaped by, the evolution of capitalist urbanisation; (c) exposing the marginalisations, exclusions and injustices (whether of class, ethnicity, 'race', gender, sexuality, nationality or otherwise) that are inscribed and naturalised within existing urban configurations; (d) deciphering the contradictions, crisis tendencies and lines of potential or actual conflict within contemporary cities, and on this basis, (e) demarcating and politicising the strategically essential possibilities for more progressive, socially just, emancipatory and sustainable formations of urban life.

The focus on critical urbanism in relation to consumption, resilience and austerity in particular reflects their continued pertinence in the contemporary urban landscape, in both Global North and Global South contexts:

Geographies of urban consumption have developed a renewed significance in recent years, especially as cities have re-oriented their economies and spaces away from production, with important implications for justice, the right to the city and emergent post-welfare landscapes. As well, the fraught relationship between consumption and growing environmental precarity places urban hubs under ever-greater strain. In the post-welfare urban landscape, resilience has become a ubiquitous process in the global city (DeVerteuil 2015). Where gentrification and inner city displacement run rife, those who remain find themselves engaged with the task of both 'holding on' and 'holding out' for social, political and economic transformations that will see their sense of place within the urban landscape renewed. Particularly in the aftermath of global recession, austerity has become a political buzzword yet critically under-examined by academics. Key debates have centred on the role of austerity as a moralising process, normalising and reinforcing particular socio-spatial inequalities. Austerity is of particular pertinence in the urban context, exposing marginalisations, injustices and exclusions inscribed into the life of the city.

We invite contributions, both empirical and conceptual, relating, but not limited to, the following:

- The role of consumption in configuring the social, economic and political logics of the city
- The transformative potential of resilience as concept, particularly in the context of the gentrifying and 'pop-up' city
- The capability of resilience to be both a reinforcement of, and challenge to, contemporary socio-political urban structures
- The promise, practices and consequences of austerity's emergent position as a normative urban condition

Papers are welcomed from researchers at any stage of their career (including PhD students). We will also be holding a 'pecha-kucha' session (presentations consisting of 20 slides shown for 20 seconds each). If you are planning on presenting in a pecha-kucha session, then please indicate this when submitting your abstract.

The conference will include three keynote talks, one for each topic:

Professor Gillian Bristow and Adrian Healy (Cardiff CPLAN) on resilience

Dr Crispian Fuller (Cardiff CPLAN) on austerity

Professor Mark Jayne (Cardiff CPLAN) on consumption

Abstracts (maximum 200 words) should be emailed to

[Melanie.nowicki.2013@live.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Melanie.nowicki.2013@live.rhul.ac.uk) by no later than Friday 26 February 2016.

The registration deadline will follow within 3-4 weeks. Please register as early as possible, as places will be limited to a maximum of 50. Standard registration will be £75; for post-graduate students and unemployed, £40. To book your place, visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ugrg-2016-annual-conference-tickets-20462377522>

If you have any further queries, please email Mel Nowicki

([Melanie.nowicki.2013@live.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Melanie.nowicki.2013@live.rhul.ac.uk)) or Ella Harris

([ella.harris.2011@live.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:ella.harris.2011@live.rhul.ac.uk))

Please visit the UGRG website for further information and updates: <http://urban-geography.org.uk/>