



Kansas City, MO, July 2007 (Elvin K. Wyly).

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Geography 552  
Urban Systems  
**Critical Measures of Urban Inequalities**  
January-May 2008, 3 credits

Tuesdays, 9:00 AM to Noon, Geog 223  
Elvin K. Wyly, Geog 252, 778 899 7906

Department of Geography  
217-1984 West Mall  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Canada V6T 1Z2  
<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewlyly/g552.html>  
Office hours: Mondays and Tuesdays 12:30-2:30  
[ewlyly@geog.ubc.ca](mailto:ewlyly@geog.ubc.ca)

### Course Description

*Catalogue description:* Analysis of changing urban systems, with examples drawn primarily from Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

In *Urban Geography*, “One can find articles on urban transformations around the world, feminist urban geography and queer theory, homelessness and welfare reform, urban identity and citizenship, racial segregation and environmental justice, patterns of e-commerce as well as traditional manufacturing, transportation and land use, urban governance regimes, implications of globalization and transnational immigration flows. The list goes on and on, speaking to the rich tapestry of the field as it has been woven throughout its recent history, nourished by the quantitative revolution, the rise of Marxian and humanistic geographies, and the effervescence of feminist, postmodern, and post-Colonial thought.”

Jennifer Wolch<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jennifer R. Wolch (2003). “Radical Openness as Method in Urban Geography.” *Urban Geography* 24(8), 645-646, quote from p. 645.

“...implicit positivism remains strong within human geography. A very large number of geographers argue that they are scientists, and seek laws or mathematical models that purport to explain the geographical world. ... However, by ignoring wider philosophical debate spatial scientists often fail to make a robust case for their approach to fellow geographers. As a consequence many [geographers] are seduced by the criticisms levelled at positivism and quantification more broadly, and become suspicious and wary of such research. Rather than tackle these criticisms, spatial science increasingly relies on the commercial and policy cache of GIS to make implicitly positivist geography sustainable.”

Rob Kitchin<sup>2</sup>

“Since the heady days of the quantitative revolution, each new paradigm in geography has attacked quantitative methods for their irrelevance, abuse, or general inadequacy at revealing the human condition.... The critique from feminists, though, puts me in a difficult position: As a feminist and a quantitative geographer, I find myself torn apart. Is there a place for quantitative methods in feminist geography?”

Sara McLafferty<sup>3</sup>

“As a geographer who uses mathematical methods in order to critique neoclassical economic geography and develop a Marxian political economic alternative, who has supported the growth of feminist, anti-essentialist and post-structuralist human geographies, and who works with marginal communities struggling to use GIS to better understand and improve their environments, I have long been convinced that progressive human geography can take advantage of quantitative practices. This seems to be an increasingly unpopular position.”

Eric Sheppard<sup>4</sup>

“What has become of critique, I wonder, when an editorial in the *New York Times*” notes that Republican pollster Frank Luntz advises his Congressional clients stalling action dealing with global warming to “emphasize that the evidence is not complete. ‘Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled,’ he writes, ‘their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, you need to continue to make *the lack of scientific certainty* a primary issue.”

Do you see why I am worried? I myself have spent some time in the past trying to show ‘the lack of scientific certainty’ inherent in the construction of facts. I too made it a ‘primary issue.’ But I did not exactly aim at fooling the public by obscuring the certainty of a closed argument -- or did I? After all, I have been accused of just that sin. Still, I’d like to believe that, on the contrary, I intended to *emancipate* the public from prematurely naturalized objectified facts. Was I foolishly mistaken? Have things changed so fast?

In which case the danger would no longer be coming from an excessive confidence in ideological arguments posturing as matters of fact -- as we have learned to combat so efficiently in the past -- but from an excessive *distrust* of good matters of fact disguised as bad ideological biases! While we spent years trying to detect the real prejudices hidden behind the appearance of objective statements, do we now have to reaveal the real objective and incontrovertible facts hidden behind the *illusion* of prejudices? And yet entire Ph.D. programs are still running to make sure that good American kids are learning the hard way that facts are made up, that there is no such thing as natural, unmediated, unbiased access to truth, that we are always prisoners of language, that we always speak from a particular standpoint, and so on, while dangerous extremists are using the very same argument of social construction to destroy hard-won evidence that could save our lives.

<sup>2</sup> Rob Kitchin (2006). “Positivistic Geographies and Spatial Science.” In Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine, editors, *Approaches to Human Geography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 20-29, quote from p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Sara L. McLafferty (1995). “Counting for Women.” *The Professional Geographer* 47(4), 436-442, quote from p. 436.

<sup>4</sup> Eric Sheppard (2001). “Quantitative Geography: Representations, Practices, and Possibilities.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, 535-554, quote from pp. 535-536.

...a certain form of critical spirit has sent us down the wrong path, encouraging us to fight the wrong enemies and, worst of all, to be considered as friends by the wrong sort of allies because of a little mistake in the definition of its main target. The question was never to get *away* from facts but *closer* to them, not fighting empiricism but, on the contrary, renewing empiricism.”

Bruno Latour<sup>5</sup>

“There exists an eager, even aggressive, audience for empirical research and an active market in such research. That market has altered the nature of the work. Data have become more political and therefore at once more in demand and less important. The data, in the words of Judge Jones and Professor Zywicki, are ‘mutually canceling.’ I disagree. Good studies and bad studies are not ‘mutually canceling.’ Regardless of what some advocates may claim, there are some objective facts and, hence, some objective truths. Whether public policy reflects that reality is not a choice left to those in the academy, but producing and protecting the research itself is our choice and our moral obligation.”

Elizabeth Warren<sup>6</sup>

This course examines the use of systematic and synthetic analytical methods to document, diagnose, and challenge urban social inequalities. ‘Systematic and synthetic analytical methods’ is an inconvenient, cumbersome phrase, but it is necessary to convey an accurate description of our task: to mobilize a spirit of calculated orderliness to break down or dissolve complex problems into constituent parts for detailed study, and to assemble the various parts into a coherent whole.<sup>7</sup> We will consider the production and distribution of quantitative data on urban phenomena at various geographical scales; the use of univariate and multivariate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, models, and mathematical metaphors, mappings, and visualizations; the deployment of systematic searches of press, legislative, legal, and regulatory databases; mixed-methods approaches seeking to break down the quantitative-qualitative dualism; the construction of compilations, indices, and tabulations derived from abstractions of qualitative data sources; the use of historical, political, and legal analysis to diagnose the history of databases and indicators produced and used by governmental entities and private corporations; and progressive, activist organizing efforts to counter state- and corporate-driven priorities in measurement.

Our work in this seminar is premised on five key assumptions. First, the intensification of urban social inequality over the past two generations is deeply problematic, and demands a sustained commitment of theoretically-informed empirical research, activist commitment to organizing and social justice, and careful strategic engagement with existing structures of law and public policy. Second, human geographers should be part of the interdisciplinary effort to document, understand, and challenge urban inequality. Third, geographers will be excluded from large parts of this interdisciplinary effort if they are unable to engage with the array of methods and techniques recognized across many of the social sciences. Over the past generation, many geographers have been taught to avoid these techniques (especially quantitative or statistical approaches), because of the ascendance of multiple, influential, and competing “post-positivist” epistemologies. Despite the foundational disagreements among post-positivist approaches, they do find common ground in a) a rejection of positivism as a fundamentally flawed epistemology,

<sup>5</sup> Bruno Latour (2004). “Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern?” *Critical Inquiry* 30, 225-248, quotes from p. 226, 227, 231.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Warren (2002). “The Market for Data: The Changing Role of Social Sciences in Shaping the Law.” *Wisconsin Law Review* 2002, 1-34, quote from p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> All from Latin modifications of the original Greek, *systema* (calculated orderliness), *analysis* (a dissolving), *meta* (after) *hodos* (way) *logos* (knowledge), *synthesis* (a putting together).



Chicago, IL, March 2006 (Elvin K. Wyly)

b) a presumption of the equivalence of quantitative and statistical methods with positivist epistemological claims, c) a suspicion of quantitative and statistical techniques as instruments of state surveillance, governmentality, and oppression, and d) a commitment to qualitative methods as epistemologically superior and politically progressive. Fourth, the shared assumptions of post-positivist approaches are historically and socially constructed; linkages between methodology and epistemology are negotiated and chosen, as are the presumed dichotomies between qualitative and quantitative inquiry. Fifth, these shared assumptions become facts -- quite literally, things that are done<sup>8</sup> -- when they are widely performed and repeated. When talented, hardworking young scholars who see themselves as politically progressive, intellectually ambitious, and theoretically cutting-edge decide to avoid learning methods caricatured as old-fashioned, mechanistic, oppressive, or irredeemably “positivist,” the result is a powerful self-selection process. Each scholar who makes this decision helps to reduce the pool of quantitative skills amongst political progressives, while also relinquishing the opportunity to communicate with (or challenge) conservative quantitative scholars and policy analysts on their own terrain.

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<sup>8</sup> From the Latin *factum*, “a thing done.”

## *Things Done, Things That Could be Done*

Not long ago, Robert W. Lake, Co-Editor of *Urban Geography*, offered a frank and sobering assessment of the state of much social science research under the simple, provocative title, “Just the Facts.” Lake is anything but a hardcore just-the-facts positivist.<sup>9</sup> But amidst the horrors of impending war and worsening social exclusion and structural inequality, he noted that “One would be hard pressed to discern the severity and pervasiveness of these matters in the pages of most academic journals.” Lake suggested that we have lost the spirit of Herbert Gans, Michael Harrington, Gunnar Myrdal, and others who were “prompted by a moral repugnance of observable inequalities and an insistent, unquenchable optimism that society could and would do better if only the facts were placed in evidence.”<sup>10</sup> Lake’s lament is of course one voice among many in the continuing scholarly debate on the purpose, meaning, and relevance of urban research.<sup>11</sup> Yet his assessment is particularly valuable as a reminder of how much has changed in the last generation, as urban geographers have questioned the meaning, limits, and relevance of structural imperatives, observable inequalities, and the facts.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Robert W. Lake (2005). “Urban Crisis Redux.” *Urban Geography* 26(3), 266-270, and also his landmark critical take on the ascendance of urban geographic information systems: Robert W. Lake (1993). “Planning and Applied Geography: Positivism, Ethics, and Geographic Information Systems.” *Progress in Human Geography* 17, 404-413.

<sup>10</sup> Robert W. Lake (2002). “Just the Facts.” *Urban Geography* 23(8), 701-702, quotes from p. 701. See also Robert W. Lake (2003). “The Antiurban Angst of Urban Geography in the 1980s.” *Urban Geography* 24(4), 352-355.

<sup>11</sup> See also Brian J.L. Berry (2003). “The Case for Debate.” *Urban Geography* 24(7), 557-559, which contrasts sharply with the spirit of “In the face of a hurricane nothing can substitute for firm foundations; big tents blow away.” Brian J.L. Berry (2002). “Big Tents or Firm Foundations?” *Urban Geography* 23(6), 501-502, quote from p. 501, and Brian J.L. Berry (2002). “Paradigm Lost.” *Urban Geography* 23(5), 441-445. For a diplomatic yet forceful response, see Wolch, “Radical Openness...” For a more pragmatic assessment of the contemporary state of urban geography in Canada, see Larry S. Bourne (2005). “Taking the Pulse of the Subdiscipline: The State of Urban Geography in Canada.” *Urban Geography* 26(3), 271-276.

<sup>12</sup> Facts? “There are no facts as such. We must always begin by introducing a meaning in order for there to be a fact.” Friederich Nietzsche, cited in Michael Watts (1988). “Struggles over Land, Struggles Over Meaning: Some Thoughts on Naming, Peasant Resistance and the Politics of Place.” In Reginald G. Golledge, Helen Couclelis, and Peter Gould, editors, *A Ground for Common Search*, pp. 31-50. Goleta, CA: The Santa Barbara Geographical Press. This kind of recognition is one of the most valuable insights of poststructuralist thought. But it is vulnerable to abuse and misappropriation, where it can underwrite dangerously creative reconstructions of acts “specifically intended” (the precise objective, not general intent) to cause “severe pain and suffering” (“the level that would ordinarily be associated with a sufficiently serious physical condition or injury such as death, organ failure, or serious impairment of body functions...” p. 6). The meaning being introduced in order for there not to be a (legal) fact is popularly known as torture, without quotes. U.S. Department of Justice (2002). *Memorandum for Alberto R. Gonzales, Counsel to the President, Re: Standards of Conduct for Interrogation Under 18 U.S.C. §§ 2340-2340A*. Washington, DC: Office of the Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice. Quotes from p. 3, 6. The careful taxonomic and legal reasoning in the memo came from Jay Bybee, assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel, a position once held by such luminaries as William H. Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia; Bybee told *Meridian*, a Mormon magazine, that “I would like my headstone to read, ‘He always tried to do the right thing.’” Adam Liptak (2004). ‘Author of ’02 Memo on Torture: ‘Gentle’ Soul for a Harsh Topic.’ *The New York Times*, June 24, A1. More broadly, “There wasn’t anything. The Americans and British created facts where there were no facts at all.” Hans Blix, interviewed in James Bamford (2004). *A Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq, and the Abuse of America’s Intelligence Agencies*. New York: Doubleday, p. 360. At the pinnacle of post-poststructuralist constructionism is a senior aide to U.S. President George W. Bush, who referred dismissively to people in “what we call the reality-based community.” The aide interrupted Ron Suskind’s questions about enlightenment principles and empiricism, saying “That’s not the way the world really works anymore .... We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality -- as you will -- we’ll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that’s how things will sort out. We’re history’s actors ... and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.” Ron Suskind (2004). “Without a Doubt.” *New York Times Magazine*, October 17, p. 44. History’s actors quickly dismissed White House Economic Advisor Lawrence Lindsey in 2003 after he made the mistake of assigning an economic estimate to the cost of one element of this new reality-creation enterprise. Lindsey’s estimate at the time was \$200 billion for the Iraq war; three years later, the (now) dissident economist Joseph Stiglitz provides a detailed analysis of direct and indirect costs incurred and expected over the next several years, estimating a total between \$1 trillion and \$2 trillion. Linda Bilmes and Joseph E. Stiglitz (2006). *The Economic Costs of the Iraq War: An Appraisal Three Years after the Beginning of the Conflict*. New York: Columbia University; available at <http://www.josephstiglitz.com>. Of more direct interest to urbanists is the concern of Ceri Peach, commenting on urban social research on race and ethnicity. In recognition of the consensus that so many of the categories of inquiry are social constructs, scholars, “when speaking in conferences, often engage in a kind of aerobic exercise in which they raise both arms and use two fingers of each hand to inscribe inverted commas around the terms which they are forced to use but to which they do not subscribe.” Ceri Peach (2000). “Discovering White Ethnicity and Parachuted Plurality.” *Progress in Human Geography* 24, 620-626, quote from p. 621. It is deeply ironic that the rich flowering of scholarship on the social construction of science and identity has coincided with countervailing trends in politics and public policy, as courts, legislatures, and other elements of the state have dismantled some social constructions (e.g., welfare, affirmative action, labor organizing rights) while aggressively building and defending others (prisons and racialized criminality, family values and heteropatriarchal marriage, the American Homeland, a New American Century). Lake’s discussion of facts not “facts” might simply be stylistic, in the spirit of Adam Hochschild’s playful comments in the margin of an early draft of *The Commercialization of Intimate Life*: “Oy!” “So” “many” “quotation

Can we recover any of this unquenchable optimism? What can be done to place the facts in evidence, and to mobilize them to challenge urban inequalities, observed and otherwise? Can society do better? In this seminar, we tackle these questions from initial premises that “critical engagement and scholarly rigor are understood as compatible properties”<sup>13</sup> and that for better or worse the links between scientific means (epistemology, methodology, technique) and ends (politics, morality, ethics) are contingent and contextual, not necessary and immutable. Our goal is to marshal a diverse set of theoretical, methodological, and empirical traditions to forge a ‘hybrid’ geography that can serve as an instrument of strategic and tactical maneuvers for social justice and new emancipatory geographies.<sup>14</sup> The choices involved in fusing divergent traditions are never free of tightly woven networks, structures, and constructions of socio-cultural meaning and power; yet any decision to abandon methodologies on the basis of their historical abuses is a risky move of unilateral disarmament. “Genuine refutation must penetrate the power of the opponent and meet him on the ground of his strength; the case is not won by attacking him somewhere else and defeating him where he is not.”<sup>15</sup> Insurgent quantitative practices,<sup>16</sup> and a strategic positivism chastened by our witness to the reactionary appropriation of the legitimacy claims of objectivity and metaphysical realism, can help the urban geographer committed to social justice to penetrate the power of her opponent and meet him on his own territory, to create new and emancipatory urban systems.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, we will examine a series of research initiatives that fuse quasi-positivist<sup>18</sup> empirical analysis of urban inequality with critical social theory, in a pluralist recognition of “the rich tapestry of the field as it has been woven throughout its recent history, nourished by the quantitative revolution, the rise of Marxism and humanistic

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marks” “around” “so” “many” “words” “makes” “the” “essay” “seem” “weird.” Arlie Russell Hochschild (2003). *The Commercialization of Intimate Life: Notes from Home and Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. ix. But other unapologetic titles suggest otherwise, especially Robert W. Lake (2002). “Bring Back Big Government.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26(4), 815-822.

<sup>13</sup> Lake, “Just the Facts,” p. 702.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Plummer and Eric Sheppard (2001). “Must Emancipatory Economic Geography be Qualitative?” *Antipode* 33(2), 194-199. See also the other essays in the Debate section of the same issue, especially Trevor Barnes’ analysis of old and new caricatures of geography as “mere description” and economics as rigorous abstraction and “staring at equations until your brain hurt.” Trevor J. Barnes (2001). “On Theory, History, and Anoraks.” *Antipode* 33(2), 162-167, quotes from p. 162.

<sup>15</sup> Theodor W. Adorno (1982). *Against Epistemology*. Oxford: Blackwell. Quote from p. 5, cited in Sheppard, “Quantitative Geography.” We take the tactical and strategic advice of Sheppard and Adorno seriously in this course, for the purpose of learning important maneuvers frequently deployed on the battlegrounds of urban policy and public discourse. Yet this approach does not mean that we lose respect for alternative approaches among allies. I am grateful to Josh Hite for alerting me to a quote from Slavoj Žižek, who in turn quotes Simon Critchley, who sees things very differently from Sheppard and Adorno: “Perhaps it is at this intensely situational, indeed local level that the atomising force of capitalist globalisation is to be met, contested and resisted. That is, it is not to be resisted by constructing a global anti-globalisation movement that, at its worst, is little more than a highly-colourful critical echo of the globalisation it contests. It is rather to be resisted by occupying and controlling the terrain upon which one stands, where one lives, works, acts and thinks. This needn’t involve millions of people. It needn’t even involve thousands. It could involve just a few at first. It could be what Julia Kristeva has recently called the domain of ‘intimate revolt.’ That is, politics begins right here, locally, practically and specifically, around a concrete issue and not by running off to protest at some meeting of the G8. You shouldn’t meet your enemy on their ground, but on your own, on the ground that you have made your own. Also think of the money and time you save on travel!” Simon Critchley (2004), “The Problem of Hegemony.” *Political Theory Daily Review*, 7-9 May, 2004, quoted in Slavoj Žižek (2006), *The Parallax View*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, p. 333.

<sup>16</sup> Sheppard, “Quantitative Geography,” specific phrase on p. 550.

<sup>17</sup> The phrase “urban systems” was coined forty years ago to describe the interconnected, interdependent networks of centralized economic and social processes that were understood to organize the spaces of regions and nation-states. Brian J.L. Berry (1964). “Cities as Systems Within Systems of Cities.” *Papers of the Regional Science Association* 13, 147-163. Viewed from the perspectives of today’s human geographies, the theoretical and methodological lineage of the phrase seems as precarious as that for regional science itself (think of central place theory colliding with general systems theory, as it sideswipes multivariate numerical taxonomy and skids across a thick slab of faith in efficient, self-equilibrating markets). But key assumptions of this heritage resurface in surprising places, and its legacy also includes insurgent moments of radical urban expeditions, welfare geography and policy influence, and many counter-mappings of alternative, just urban landscapes. See Sheppard, “Quantitative Geography...”; Olivier Kramsch and Frans Boekema (2002). “Breaking Out of the ‘Isolated State’: Views on the Status and Future of Regional Science from a European Border Region.” *Environment and Planning A* 34, 1373-1393; and David M Smith (1994). *Geography and Social Justice*. Oxford: Blackwell.

<sup>18</sup> This is a cumbersome and perhaps distasteful term, but hopefully the *seeming* or *root* help to convey some of the more important intended meanings. Our focus is on analytical methods -- qualitative and quantitative -- that rely on some appeal to hypothesis verification and falsification, cautious generalization, observability, attempted disinterested impartiality, and replication. Following Matthew Hannah’s reasoning, our approach is situated somewhere between social constructionism *al dente* and positivism *al dente*. Matthew G. Hannah (2001). “Sampling and the Politics of Representation in U.S. Census 2000.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, 515-534.

geographies, and the effervescence of feminist, postmodern, and post-Colonial thought.”<sup>19</sup> Case studies include the magnification of inequalities in so-called ‘global’ cities; recent trajectories of metropolitan class polarization; feminist perspectives on methodological debates and daily urban life; racial segregation and policy responses to concentrated urban poverty; evolving inequalities of gentrification and anti-homeless policies; dilemmas of identity and categorization in data, activism, and regulation; and informational activism in digital cities in the shadow of threats of nascent forms of ‘geo-slavery.’ Some of the material involves multivariate quantitative methods, but this seminar is not an uncritical methodological water-boarding. It is also not an extended external critique. We’re aiming for something in between these two, a critical engagement with the value and limits of the methods for understanding and challenging contemporary urban inequalities -- sensitized to the need to frame constructive criticism within a spirit of care of the subject.<sup>20</sup>

## Readings and Reference Materials

All required readings will be available in a password-protected directory, at <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/Private/g552/>

You may also wish to consider various resources (listed below) on particular methodologies, data sources, and simple tools for analysis. None of these are required reading, but some of them may be useful in your research.

Luc Anselin, Ibnu Syabri, and Younihn Kho (2006). “GeoDA: An Introduction to Spatial Data Analysis.” *Geographical Analysis* 38, 5-22.

Luc Anselin, Sanjeev Sridharan, and Susan Gholston (2007). “Using Exploratory Spatial Data Analysis to Leverage Social Indicator Databases: The Discovery of Interesting Patterns.” *Social Indicators Research* 82, 287-309.

### Wyly Notes

*Critical Data.* <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/data.html>

*Replication Datasets.* <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/replication.html>

*A Short History of Quantification in Geography.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_hist.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_hist.pdf)

*Data.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_data.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_data.pdf)

*Classification and Cluster Analysis.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_clus.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_clus.pdf)

*Mapping Global Firms and World Cities.* <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/g350/gawc.pdf>

*Mapping Vancouver’s Evolving Social Mosaic.* <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/g350/factorial.pdf>

*Logistic Regression.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_logit.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_logit.pdf)

*Ecological Inference, Part 1.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_eco1.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_eco1.pdf)

*Ecological Inference, Part 2.* [http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606\\_eco2.pdf](http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/teaching/606_eco2.pdf)

### SAS Institute Resources

*The Little SAS Book*, Ch. 1 <http://support.sas.com/publishing/pubcat/chaps/59216.pdf>

*The SAS Workbook*, Ch. 1 <http://support.sas.com/publishing/pubcat/chaps/55473.pdf>

*SAS Programming by Example*, Ch. 1 <http://support.sas.com/publishing/pubcat/chaps/55126.pdf>

*A Step-by-Step Approach...*, Ch.1 <http://support.sas.com/publishing/pubcat/chaps/58929.pdf>

*Selecting Statistical Techniques...*, Ch. 1 <http://support.sas.com/publishing/pubcat/chaps/55854.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Wolch, “Radical Openness...,” p. 645.

<sup>20</sup> “...many of the critiques of geographic information systems (GIS) have aimed to demonstrate what is ‘wrong’ with this subdiscipline of geography rather than engaging critically with the technology. ... This follows a pattern of external critique in which the investigator has little stake in the outcome. ... we argue for a form of critique that transcends this binary [between internal and external] by tackling enframing assumptions while remaining invested in the subject. To be constructive, critique must care for the subject.” Nadine Schuurman and Geraldine Pratt (2002). “Care of the Subject: Feminism and Critiques of GIS.” *Gender, Place, and Culture* 9(3), 291-299.

A Random Sample of Methodological Texts<sup>21</sup>

Robin Flowerdew and David Martin, eds. (2005). *Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice-Hall.

Nicholas J. Clifford and Gill Valentine, eds. (2003). *Key Methods in Geography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

R.J. Johnston (1978). *Multivariate Statistical Analysis in Geography*. London: Longman.

Peter J. Taylor (1977). *Quantitative Methods in Geography: An Introduction to Spatial Analysis*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Subhash Sharma (1996). *Applied Multivariate Techniques*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Perry R. Hinton (1995). *Statistics Explained: A Guide for Social Science Students*. New York: Routledge.

Peter A. Rogerson (2006). *Statistical Methods for Geographers: A Student's Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hubert A. Blalock (1960). *Social Statistics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

**Evaluation and Deadlines**

Evaluation is based on three components: participation in seminar discussions (15 percent), written discussion papers (15 percent) and a final paper on a topic to be agreed with the instructor (70 percent).

*Components of Final Course Mark*  
percentage

- 1. 15 Participation in seminar discussions
- 2. 15 Written discussion papers  
 Due at the beginning of each seminar meeting. Bring enough copies to distribute to all seminar participants. Discussion papers can be as short or as long as you'd like, but I don't *expect* more than one page.
- 3. 70 Research Paper  
 Research papers may address any aspect of critical measures of urban inequality: on the one hand, you may wish to analyze the *politics* of data, methods, and interpretation in a particular area of urban inequality in relation to issues of theory and policy. On the other hand, you may wish to undertake a *quantitative empirical analysis* of a specified dimension of urban inequality. Both paths are equally valuable and legitimate.

Proposal deadline: 9:00 AM February 5  
 First draft deadline: 9:00 AM March 4  
 Second draft deadline: 9:00 AM April 8  
 Final paper deadline: 9:00 AM May 2

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<sup>21</sup> Again, note that none of these are required reading for the seminar. These citations are provided only to get you started on references if you wish to investigate particular methods and techniques in depth. "Random Sample" is roughly translated as "conveniently within reach on my bookshelf as I type the syllabus this morning."

Please plan ahead for the final paper deadline; this date is as late as possible under University regulations, and so I am unable to grant further extensions. All other deadlines noted above are optional but firm. You are not required to submit a proposal, first draft, or second draft; but if you wish to obtain feedback at any of these stages, you must meet the specified deadline.

## Schedule

On the following pages is a tentative schedule, with corresponding readings, and a lot of other references that may be of interest. Don't panic: there is no requirement to read every item on these lists. For each week, we will all read a set of "core" pieces. Discussants will then present commentary and analysis for *some* of the other readings, exploring how respective articles relate to the core readings we've all examined. The short discussion papers may engage with one or more of the readings, but need not be constrained by them: do whatever will be most helpful for your own project or for our collective 'barn-raising' endeavors. Bring enough copies of your discussion paper for all seminar participants.

### Jan 8 **Introductions. You. Me. The Course.**

Please read through this syllabus, either before or after our first meeting, and then read:

Some of the data sources referenced at <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/data.html>

Michael Kahn (1971). *Seminaring Letter*. Unpublished manuscript. Santa Cruz, CA: University of California, Kresge College.

Robert W. Lake and Peter O. Muller (2004). "Editorial: Pluralism as Principle in Urban Geography." *Urban Geography* 25(6), 501-502.

### Jan 15 **Critical Analytical Urbanism.**

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Eric Sheppard (2001). "Quantitative Geography: Representations, Practices, and Possibilities." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, 535-554.

Mei-Po Kwan and Tim Schwanen (2007). *Critical Quantitative Geographies*. Outline for five paper sessions and panel discussions at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, April 17-21, San Francisco, CA, sponsored by the Urban Geography Specialty Group, the Spatial Analysis & Modeling Specialty Group, and the Geographical Perspectives on Women Specialty Group. Full abstracts available at <http://www.aag.org>

Mark Ellis (2008). "Vital Statistics." Under first review, *Professional Geographer*.

Trevor Barnes (2008). "Not Only ... But Also: Quantitative and Critical Geography." Under first review, *Professional Geographer*.

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- Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2000). "Intervention: What Kind of Economic Theory for What Kind of Economic Geography?" *Antipode* 32(1), 4-9.
- Paul Plummer and Eric Sheppard (2001). "Must Emancipatory Economic Geography be Qualitative?" *Antipode* 33(2), 194-199.
- Paul Plummer (2001). "Commentary: Vague Theories, Sophisticated Techniques, and Poor Data." *Environment and Planning A* 33, 761-764.

The conceptualization of "critical analytical urbanism" is a fusion of Eric Sheppard's notion of "insurgent quantitative practices," Dorling and Simpson's work with the Radical Statistics Group,<sup>22</sup> Martin Cadwallader's reference to "analytical urban geography,"<sup>23</sup> and my own thinking on the possibilities for a strategic positivism. Several years ago, Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift offered the inaugural essay in the 'Interventions' section of *Antipode*, under the title, "What Kind of Economic Theory for What Kind of Economic Geography?" Amin and Thrift's intervention was born of frustration amongst economic geographers trying to engage with the powerful domain of mainstream economics, with its restrictive methodological and theoretical criteria for valid knowledge. Amin and Thrift argued that much of the best current economic thinking is taking place outside the mainstream, led by dissident economists as well as those without disciplinary credentials in economics; as a result, Amin and Thrift suggest, economic geographers no longer need to struggle for a seat at the table with mainstream economics: "...at this point in time, we need to think seriously about whom we as economic geographers want to play out with. We think we would be fooling ourselves if we believe we can lie down with the lion and become anything more than prey."<sup>24</sup>

Amin and Thrift's provocative metaphor (economists as lions, geographers as prey) attracted considerable attention, including the Plummer and Sheppard essay listed above, as well as eight additional responses by prominent geographers. One of the central axes of debate over Amin and Thrift's intervention involves a presumed dualism between means and ends: quantitative inquiry is associated with orthodox, mainstream, or reactionary status-quo research, while qualitative inquiry is believed to foster greater emancipatory possibilities. The latter side of the dualism is directly contradicted by the rich history of anthropological

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Dorling and Stephen Simpson, editors (1999). *Statistics in Society: The Arithmetic of Politics*. London: Arnold.

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ethnographies placed in service of colonialism, while the former rests on a caricature of quantitative research that no longer holds. As Poon concludes in a recent review: “Few quantitative human geographers today fully subscribe to the revered modernist principles of certainty and predictability that commonly characterize nomothetic research using the scientific method. ... production of quantitative methods by geographers ... is increasingly shaped by concerns of methodological legislation, where jurors are encouraged to discriminate between wheat and chaff when confronted with evidence that encompasses spatial uncertainty and diversity.”<sup>25</sup> The continued reproduction of simplified caricatures of quantitative inquiry, although understandable in light of key generational issues bound up with the distinctive disciplinary history of the (erroneously labeled) quantitative revolution and its prominent advocates, has limited trans-disciplinary engagement with important strategic movements to advance social justice on geographic issues.

For two decades beginning in the late 1960s, dissidents in geography labored to produce rich critiques of a quantitative-positivist methodology and epistemology that was understood to be hegemonic in the field.<sup>26</sup> Urban geography was at the center of this intellectual, political, and methodological turmoil. Thirty years on, however, many geographers have absorbed only the most abridged versions of this rich history, perpetuating simplified caricatures of quantification and positivism. A poignant contrast with some of these caricatures (which are premised on an asserted comprehensive understanding of, and transcendence of, positivist epistemology) comes from legal scholarship, which has only recently undertaken comprehensive efforts to infuse social-scientific epistemologies and methodologies into judicial reasoning. For a lengthy yet accessible analysis of the current effort to infuse contemporary positivist social science into the law, see the work of Lee Epstein and Gary King.<sup>27</sup> Within geography, one of the most systematic attempts to fuse a more productive methodological and epistemological agenda comes from John Paul Jones’ effort to engage a realist perspective with Emilio Casetti’s expansion method.<sup>28</sup>

## Jan 22 **A New World Urban Hierarchy?**

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Lisa Benton-Short, Marie D. Price, and Samantha Friedman (2005). “Globalization from Below: The Ranking of Global Immigrant Cities.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29(4), 945-959.

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<sup>25</sup> Jessie P.H. Poon (2003). “Quantitative Methods: Producing Quantitative Methods Narratives.” *Progress in Human Geography* 27(6), 753-762, quotes from p. 754. See also Jesse P.H. Poon (2004). “Quantitative Methods: Past and Present.” *Progress in Human Geography* 28(6), 807-814.

<sup>26</sup> This contemporary historical critique and re-evaluation continues, exemplified by Trevor Barnes’ wonderful histories of various statistical techniques. See Trevor J. Barnes (1998). “A History of Regression: Actors, Networks, Machines, and Numbers.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30, 203-223.

<sup>27</sup> Lee Epstein and Gary King (2002). “The Rules of Inference.” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 69(1), 1-133.

<sup>28</sup> John Paul Jones, III, and Robert Q. Hanham (1995). “Contingency, Realism, and the Expansion Method.” *Geographical Analysis* 27(3), 185-207; and John Paul Jones, III, and Emilio Casetti, eds. (1992). *Applications of the Expansion Method*. New York: Routledge.

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Jan 29 **Urban Systems of Inequality: Neoliberal Urbanization and the 'Global City' Polarization Hypothesis.**

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- Gila Menahem and Nelly Elias (2007). "Gendered Occupational Differences and Earnings Gaps in Globalizing Urban Economies: The Case of Tel-Aviv." *Urban Studies* 44(11), 2211-2229.

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- Manning Marable (2006). "Race, Class, and the Katrina Crisis." *WorkingUSA* 9, 155-160.

Feb 12 **Mapping and Mobilizing: Metropolitan Class Polarization and Living Wage Movements.**

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Feb 26 **Feminist Urbanism, Geographic Information Science, and ‘Ground Truth.’**

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Sara McLafferty (2002). “Mapping Women’s Worlds: Knowledge, Power, and the Bounds of GIS.” *Gender, Place, and Culture* 9(3), 263-296.

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Mar 4 **Aftermath of the Underclass Debates: Poverty Deconcentration.**

**First draft due.**

*Everyone Reads:*

Paul A. Jargowsky and Rebecca Yang (2006). “The ‘Underclass’ Revisited: A Social Problem in Decline.” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28(1), 55-70.

Joe Grengs (2007). “Reevaluating Poverty Concentration with Spatial Analysis: Detroit in the 1990s.” *Urban Geography* 28(4), 340-360.

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Jason Hackworth (2003). "Public housing and the Rescaling of Regulation in the USA." *Environment and Planning A* 35, 531-549.

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### Mar 11 **Counting, Categorization, Citizenship.**

*Everyone Reads:*

Matthew G Hannah (2001). "Sampling and the Politics of Representation in US Census 2000." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, 515-534.

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### Mar 25 **GerrymanderInfo™: Mapping Electoral Systems.**

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Apr 8 **The Informational City Revisited: City of Emancipatory Bits or Geoslavery?**

**Second draft due.**

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