

Brown Bag Lunch with Visiting Scholars

SPECIAL PUBLIC SPACE SEMINAR

Thomas Hall, Cardiff University, Anthropology

Robin Smith, Cardiff University, Sociology

Kurt Iveson, University of Sydney, Geography

Chair Setha Low, Graduate Center – CUNY, Environmental Psychology and Anthropology



Friday, September 11, 2015 from 1 -2:30 PM

Graduate Center, Psychology Hub (6th Floor)

Thomas Hall Focus on empirical and ethnographic research in the following fields: homelessness and 'street' populations, spatial practices of urban care, repair and patrol, begging, benefits and gifts, youth transitions, biography and locality (including mixed methods work with young people), informal education and citizenship and devolved governance and the third (community) sector. Am also interested in the cultural sociology of urban and social exploration, (pedestrian) motilities and mobile methods. These various interests converge on, and inform, a primary concern with the street-level experience and management of inequality in urban public space(s).

Robin Smith Research and teaching is concerned with the everyday life of urban public spaces. He is interested in, and encourages students to take an interest in, both the street-level politics of city life and the mundane accomplishment of mobility practices and interaction. These themes have been addressed through research on everyday sense-making in regenerated space, practices of street-based welfare and vulnerable urban groups and, most recently, an investigation of co-operative mobility practices. He also has an abiding interest in social science methodology as a topic of inquiry.

Kurt Iveson His research focuses on the relationship between the urban, the public sphere, and politics. This has involved examinations of conflicts over public space associated with a range of practices such as protesting, graffiti writing, cruising, and advertising. More recently, Kurt has begun to focus on the ways in which equality is enacted in cities, through archival research and participatory action research on urban alliances and social movements. Here, he is particularly interested in the ways in which equality is pursued through efforts to 'make space public' that transgress taken-for-granted geographies of the public/private distinction. His talk today will consider the ways in which Sydney's infamous 'Green Ban' activists in the 1970s developed novel and powerful tactics for transforming privately-owned construction sites into politicized public spaces, thereby preventing dozens of major 'developments' that would have displaced the poor and degraded the urban environment.

For more information contact Setha Low (slow@gc.cuny.edu)