***Chapter for Oxford Handbook of Criminology***

**Crime and the City: Urban Encounters, Civility and Tolerance**

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**Abstract**

This chapter examines how cities are central to understandings of civility and tolerance and their relationships to crime and antisocial behaviour. The chapter identifies the importance of urban encounters in public space and explores whether antisocial behaviour, incivilities and a general antipathy towards ‘others’ are increasing in contemporary societies. The chapter looks at definitions of civility and tolerance and theories about how urban behaviours in public space are related to wider urban economic, social and cultural forces and how civility and tolerance are being transformed in a new planetary urbanism and social Darwinism. The chapter concludes with an examination of the governance of urban insecurities and public perceptions of these, followed by consideration of how a new urban civility and tolerance may be engendered through meaningful interaction.

**Key words:** antisocial behaviour; cities; civility; crime; social Darwinism; tolerance; urban encounters; public space

**Introduction**

There is an inherent paradox at the heart of contemporary debates about urban crime, violence and antisocial behaviour. On the one hand, there is a transnational reduction in the levels of recorded crime in many Western nations at national and individual city levels and authors, such as Pinker (2011), have argued that global levels of violence and conflict are historically low and continue to decline. On the other hand, fear of crime and perceptions of antisocial behaviour among populations remain persistently high. Indeed there appears to be a broader and more pervasive sense of insecurity centred on encounters with difference within urban populations: differences relating to physical and economic wellbeing and life opportunities. Arguably this has been exacerbated by tensions relating to terrorism, ethno-religious conflict, cultural clashes of civilisations and large scale migrations across and within national territorial boundaries (Young, 2007). As the planet becomes increasingly urbanised, these dynamics play out in urban spaces that provide the landscapes and arenas for encounters between populations and where processes of both cohesion and division are manifested.

This chapter begins by identifying the importance of cities and concepts of the urban to understandings of civility. It continues by exploring debates about the extent to which urban civility and tolerance are declining. The chapter then turns to definitions of civility and theories of how urban behaviour is influenced by changing urban economic and social conditions and how these are being transformed in the contemporary urban age. Drawing heavily on the work of Wyly (2015) we consider the extent to which urban processes may be conceptualised as a form of social Darwinism in which new forms of competition reconfigure social tensions and exclusion or, alternatively, whether urbanity is primarily characterised (or might be enhanced) by cooperation and cohesion. The chapter discusses key debates about propinquity as a mechanism for enhancing civility and tolerance and the various techniques of urban governance that are deployed to shape urban encounters and manage hyper-diversity. We conclude that new global forms of urban connectivity are reframing the urban contexts of civility and tolerance and their relationships with (perceptions of) crime and antisocial behaviour in the cities of the 21st Century.

**The Janus-faced City: Urban Encounters and (In)Civility**

Cities have always been conceptualised as producers of civilisation and as arenas in which civility may be enacted. According to David Hume, civil populations ‘flock[ed] into cities’ as sites where they could ‘communicate knowledge [and] show their wit or their breeding’ (Hume, 1985: 271). Mumford (1996 [1937]) argued that in cities: ‘Men…are withdrawn from barbarous fixity and force to a certain mildness of manners, and to humanity and justice…good behaviour is yet called urbanitas because it is rather found in cities than elsewhere’. In these terms, the city may be understood as a place of encounter and assembly (Lefebvre, 1970), and through these mechanisms as a driver of public sociability (Sennett, 1996). By equal measure, cities have also been viewed as fostering incivility and antipathy. Engels (1934: 24), in his account of the *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, states: ‘The very turmoil of the streets has something repulsive…The brutal indifference, the unfeeling isolation of each in his private interest becomes the more repellent and offensive, the more…individuals are crowded together, within a limited space’. Cities, therefore, have always been recognised as Janus-faced: they inculcate the highest standards of urban refinement and achievements of citizenship, whilst simultaneously possessing qualities that threaten chaos and the breakdown of social order. As de Tocqueville writes of Manchester in 1835: ‘Here…humanity attains its most complete development and its most brutish; here civilisation works its miracles and civilised man is turned back almost into a savage’ (quoted in Hall, 2002: 310). Contemporary variations of these themes continue. For commentators such as Glaeser (2011:26) cities are our greatest invention, enhancing wealth, intelligence, health and wellbeing, while for others the contemporary neo-liberal city is increasingly characterised by segregation and the intensifying exclusion of particular social groups (Wacquant, 2008).

There are strong linkages between the physical and social environments of the city and both the perceptions and realities of civility, crime and antisocial behaviour. The physical environment, its architecture, conduits, public and private spaces can shape interactions between individuals and groups, influencing opportunities for disorder and its control (Felson, 2008; Clarke, 1980; Brantingham and Brantingham, 1984). Similarly, the social environment, manifest in terms of the levels of trust and cooperation within and between groups of urban residents, conceptualised as social capital (Putnam, 2001) or ‘collective efficacy’ (Sampson *et al*., 1997), is posited to hold a direct relationship with rates of antisocial behaviour, crime and violence. Many forms of antisocial behaviour or crime occur in the public spaces of neighbourhoods and have a strong determinant on residents’ perceptions of their neighbourhoods and neighbours. The most common forms of complaints about antisocial behaviour in neighbourhoods are those relating to noise and phenomena such as littering, vandalism, public consumption of alcohol and groups congregating. The fact that in the United States these behaviours are termed ‘incivilities’ indicates how they are seen to undermine public sociability, cohesion and cooperation in urban areas.

**Declining Urban Civility?**

Forces operating at an international scale impact on civility in cities. Green and Germen Janmaat (2012) argue that, despite variations, globalization and its inherent crises have reduced social cohesion in many nations. Recognition of declining civility, of the reality or perceived threat of intergroup conflict, has found form in community cohesion and antisocial behaviour policies across Europe and beyond. In the UK, the New Labour governments of 1997 to 2010 prioritised tackling antisocial behaviour and promoted a Respect Agenda on the basis that the ‘values necessary to support respect are becoming less widely held - and that this change has led to an increase in disrespectful behaviour’ (Respect Task Force, 2006: 5, see Powell and Flint, 2009). This paradigm was retained in the notion of a ‘Broken Britain’ developed by Conservative thinkers (Social Justice Policy Group, 2006). Commentators, such as Browne (2008), cite survey evidence indicating a widespread perception amongst the British population that there has been a decrease in civility, morals, and respect for authority, and an increase in anti-social behaviour. This narrative is countered by Griffith *et al*. (2011) who challenge the objective evidence for any decline in civility, arguing that Britain is largely a well-mannered and courteous society, which has experienced a long-term decline in casual violence, racism and antisocial behaviour. Indeed,Williams and McConnell (2011) argue that urban public space can be predominately characterised as a site of everyday moments of co-existence, cooperation and exchange. Similarly, and in the United States, Lee (2006) describes how urban interactions between different racial groups are characterised by civility, routine and ‘business as usual’ as the norm, whilst Bloom *et al*. (2015) provide strong evidence to counter the myths of chronic antisocial behaviour, incivility and racial tensions in public housing. For Lee (2006) this prosaic routine can intermittently be ruptured by ‘explosive tension’, with recent examples being the rioting across urban France in 2005 and in urban England in 2011. Such outbreaks of urban violence and criminality in turn generate new forms of moral panic about declining morality, civility and social cohesion. In turn, elites and governing authorities undertake ‘civilising offensives’ in an endeavour to renew civic values and forms of responsibility perceived to have eroded amongst targeted populations such as youths, the working class or ethnic minorities (see Powell and Flint, 2011). Yet, and irrespective of the impact of ‘civilising offensives’ on actual behaviours, a pervasive sense of urban insecurity persists.

The multi-various and interlocking forces that shape the city have resulted in its accommodation of vast differences. Multiple identities drawn on cultural, material, religious and ethnic lines find co-presence in residential, public and commercial spaces (Bannister and Kearns, 2013). The propinquity of difference, however, does not serve to engender encounter nor a sense of well being when encounters do take place. Valentine *et al.* (2015), for example, have identified triggers to negative emotions and prejudice within the realities of everyday proximity. Demographically and ethnically mixed neighbourhoods can be characterised by a lack of engagement or overt hostility between groups (Amin, 2012; Byrne *et al*., 2006; Gijsberts *et al*., 2011). Such existence without depth or meaning to relationships (Byrne *et al*., 2006) results in what Amin (2012) terms a civility of indifference. The ‘parallel lives’ lived by residents in polarised or segregated urban communities serves to negate the permeability of neighbourhoods and the potential of social interaction (Valins, 2003). These insights are suggestive of an increased social and spatial separation of urban populations, whereby the propinquity of difference leads people to withdraw, to ‘hibernate’ (Putnam, 2000). The realities or perception of a declining urban civility, of an antipathy towards difference, demands that we consider the meaning of civility and tolerance and their role in an emergent planetary urbanism.

**Civility, Tolerance and Planetary Urbanism**

Civility enables us to negotiate encounters with difference. The ‘formal’ expression of civility elides, in Boyd’s (2006: 864) view, with ‘the manners, politeness, courtesies or other formalities of face-to-face interactions in everyday life’. Though superficial and lacking in intensity, these interactions and actions enable surety to replace risk, in that they act as ‘an instrument of social control’ (Boyd 2006: 869). The ‘formal’ expression of civility, however, rests on an appreciation of the legitimate presence of others and is therefore based on a ‘substantive’ civility, which ‘denotes a sense of standing or membership in the political community with its attendant rights and responsibility’ (Boyd, 2006: 864) and ‘presupposes an active and affirmative moral relationship between persons. Being civil is a way of generating moral respect and democratic equality…civility is a moral obligation borne out of an appreciation of human equality’ (*ibid* 875).

For Boyd (2006) the notion of civility was uniquely associated with the modern socioeconomic order of the emerging market economy from the 18th Century. Crucially, the commercial society and the city, as its epitome, facilitated forms of social cooperation through trade, socialising and residential proximity that did not necessitate a resolution of the fundamental moral, religious, cultural and philosophical disputes that had characterised Western Europe, and its bloody ethno-religious conflicts, in earlier centuries. The ubiquity of these tensions, however, is highlighted by the re-emergence of what has been termed ‘the fundamentalist city’ (AlSayyad and Massoumi, 2011), in which, often exclusionary, socio-spatial ultra-religious practices reshape global urban spaces. Such religious urbanism engages in a struggle with key tenets of modernity, including individualism, tolerance of diversity and the permeability of the city. . Equally, although such tenets are manifested in liberal regimes such as Britain and the United States, equality has never been conceptualised as a necessary condition of social cohesion (Green and Germen Janmaat, 2012).

The growth in urban populations and their diversity, which resulted in the ‘constant and intense’ propinquity of difference in modern urbanism, made civility a requirement for the city to function (Boyd, 2006). Elias (2000) described how, in what he termed the civilizing process, the growing organisational complexity of commercial urban societies was the catalyst for a process of psychologization whereby ‘more people are forced more often to pay more attention to more other people’ (Goudsblom, 1989, quoted in Mennell, 1990: 209). This increasing complexity through the growing differentiation and integration of social functions results in a reflexive requirement to behave with greater consideration of the feelings and interests of more people, for more of the time and thereby mutually expected self-restraint has risen (Wouters, 1986; Elias, 2000). This socialisation process remains directly linked to the economic order: ‘The hyperspecialisation of the urban economy means that we are entirely dependent for the satisfaction of even our most basic needs on a multitude of individuals who are necessarily strangers to us’ (Boyd, 2006: 871). Griffith *et al*. (2011: 26) similarly argue that civility increases in modern society, as ‘we have to be so polite because we are so different’. This self-restraint extends to the notion of tolerance: of not interfering with conduct, practices or beliefs that we disapprove of (Furedi, 2011). In these terms, tolerance functions as a mechanism to enable social harmony, to make possible socio-economic advance, in diverse and multicultural urban societies (Brown, 2006; Waltzer, 1997; Bannister and Kearns, 2013). The social constraint of individuals was also linked to the pacification of social spaces, including those that evolved into cities (Elias, 2000).

But, if civility and tolerance were products of previous economic orders, manifest in the daily encounters of industrial and post-industrial cities, are these being transformed in our own era? If civility and tolerance are a mechanism through which our connectivity to others is performed, are these being reconfigured in light of what Wyly (2015) terms new forms of planetary connectivity? Wyly (2015) engages with Teilhard de Chardin’s (1964) notion of the noosphere as a planetary super stage of consciousness in which humanity would move toward unheard-of and unimaginable degrees of organised complexity and of reflective consciousness to become ultra-reflexive. This resonates with Elias’ (2000) notion of civilising processes, such that as structures of societies become more complex, manners, culture and personality also change. Crucially, Elias (2000) argued that such processes occur firstly among elite groups then gradually more widely (Mennell (1990: 207). Contemporary elites are emerging through reconfigured networks of diverse, dynamic global cities constituted through planetary communication circuits resulting in a new type of ‘cognitive-cultural capitalism’ (Wyly, 2015; Moulier-Boutang, 2012). Such cognitive cultural capitalism is defined by increasingly diverse pathways from cultural identity and creativity to the valorization of success through competition, increasingly mediated by socially networked information technologies, driven by those corporations who own and develop the technology and platforms for these circuits, such as Apple, Google and Facebook (Wyly, 2015). The new elites become conceptualised as ‘cosmopolitan patriots’ (Apiah, 1997), who in response to global crisis and insecurity offer an alternative to a fortress mentality bounded by space and sovereignty (Wyly, 2015). Florida (2003), with reference to globally circulating technology, talent and tolerance, has described a ‘new industrial revolution inside people’s heads’ (quoted in Wyly, 2015), in which the primacy of creativity and knowledge over other forms of identity and legitimacy require forms of tolerance in the same way that the enactment of forms of civility among diverse populations was necessary for the industrial city to function. Thus, Wyly argues, Webber’s (1964) idea of a non-place urban realm of community without propinquity takes new planetary and transnational forms (Wyly, 2015).

How we fundamentally understand urban connectivity shapes the conceptualisation of the role of civility and tolerance in cities. For writers such as Mumford (1937) the urban phenomena was characterised by social cooperation and the formation of ‘cities where men by mutual society and company together do grow to alliances, commonalities and corporations.’ Similarly, Dewey (1920) believed that the environment changed through an evolution that was a collective social process based on cooperation and communication. Dewey argued that human beings could control and manage human affairs. This idea - that the future could be predicated and influenced; that urban problems were not intractable but that cities could be made - was at the very heart of the birth of modern town planning and governance in nations such as France, Britain and the United States, where its proponents sought to impose order on the chaos of urban experience.

But an alternative understanding is that competition is the fundamental component of urban experience and that (perceptions of) antisocial behaviour, incivilities and crime are one manifestation of such competition made visible. The physical propinquity of diversity does not, of itself, deliver social harmony. Rather, it serves to dissolve social connections: ‘Warm attachments, born of ancient, local contiguity and personal intercourse vanished in the fierce contest for wealth among thousands who had never seen each other’s faces before’ (Toynbee, 1884, quoted in Hunt, 2004: 16; see also Engels, 1934 and Zorbaugh, 1924, for similar accounts of 19th Century Manchester and 20th Century Chicago respectively). The urban is, in this reading, essentially a form of social Darwinist competition, involving the survival of the fittest (Glass, 1964). Wyly (2015) observed that this Darwinist competition became disguised in the urban ecology, and its naturalised narratives, that developed through the Chicago School. Further, he suggests that the contemporary urban era represents a new human ecology of social Darwinist competition that is manifested in the transformations of urban space (see also Zukin, 1991). For Thrift (2005), elements of antagonism as well as solidarity are inherent to urban existence, while Flint (2009) argues that the non-antagonistic city is an ill-conceived fantasy, despite attempts to integrate class, cultural and ethno-religious differences into a global, cosmopolitan smooth space absent of friction or conflict (Diken, 2004).

Such attempts deny the extent to which confinement, insulation and exclusion can be characterised as enduring responses to urban difference, finding form in: the Jewish ghettos of medieval European cities; the workhouse, prison and lunatic asylum of the 19th Century (Foucault, 1977); the periphery public housing estates of the 20th Century (including the French banliues that epitomise ethno-religious tensions and urban disorder); the sanitisation of commercial and formerly public spaces in city centres (Davis, 1991; Sorkin, 2008); and, the global growth of gated communities and common interest developments of the late 20th and early 21st Centuries.

Elite groups have sought to physically insulate themselves from difference in the contemporary city (Atkinson and Flint, 2004). In part, this represents a continuum of the segregation of classes that Engels (1934) and others described in the industrial city of the 19th Century. A recent and controversial example of this phenomenon has been the use of ‘poor doors’ through which a socio-spatial segregation of different income groups is achieved by the use of separate entrances for different tenure groups in new ‘mixed’ residential developments. Effectively, separate entrances serve to minimise the physical proximity of, and consequently the potential for urban encounters between, social classes (Osborne, 2014).

**The Governance of Urban Insecurities**

So, whilst planetary urbanism has ushered in a new era of hitherto unimaginable connectivity, its in-place manifestation as a constant and intense propinquity of difference has delivered friction and competition over harmony and cooperation. Friction and competition, perhaps as it has always done, has served to provoke a societal preference for confinement, insulation and exclusion. It is these processes that have served to shape the urban landscape in which markedly intensive governance of urban interactions occurred from the 1990s.

The governance of public housing has been central to processes of urban segregation. Public housing authorities’ have been ambiguous in their governance of diversity, both strongly promoting mixed communities (of income, ethnicity and age) to reduce social marginalisation, whilst also using forms of geographical segregation, such as enacting age restrictions to separate younger and older populations, to reduce social conflict. However, there is also a prominent history of more hidden forms of segregation and exclusion that have sought to reduce social tension and antisocial behaviour by denying access to marginalised groups in the first place. This includes, for example, the very restrictive allocation eligibility criteria used by New York Housing Authority to insulate its developments from the most vulnerable or problematic households and the increasing use in the UK of probationary tenancies and the denial of access to individuals with a history of antisocial behaviour. The examination of contemporary housing and urban systems provides clear evidence to support Wyly’s (2015) arguments about social Darwinism. Working class, ethnic minority and younger populations have become increasingly displaced from central urban areas through: what has been termed domicide (Shao, 2013) and state violence, both symbolic and real (Allen, 2008; Slater, 2012); rising property prices, demolition, relocation and urban renewal programmes (Goetz, 2013); significant reductions in housing-related welfare support to individuals (such as the imposition of ‘the bedroom tax’ in the UK to address the alleged over-occupation of some social housing properties); and, through reduced subsidies to social housing agencies. In the Netherlands, the so-called ‘Rotterdam Law’ now enables municipalities to forbid households from weaker socio-economic positions from moving to specific neighbourhoods (Uitermark et al, 2015). Governance regimes are not limited to national polities. Municipalities in Western Europe and the United States have sought to deny specific groups, particularly immigrants, access to housing or other welfare support (Gilbert, 2009), for example the recent banning of male refugees from swimming pools in Borhheim, Germany in the context of controversies of sexual harassment (Guardian, 2015). In addition, private companies play an increasingly prominent role in the social and physical governance of diversity, illustrated by the controversy over G4S allegedly using the colour of doors to demarcate the residences of asylum seekers in England (Mason et al., 2015).

The governance of urban interactions, as of any policy context, is an inherently political process (Davis and Nutley, 2001) involving ideology, vested interests, institutional norms and path dependencies (Weiss, 2001). In these terms, it is necessary to consider the weighting ascribed to different policy drivers (or forms of knowledge) and their relation to specific stages of the policy making process. To this end, Tebensel (2008) recommends deployment of a typology of knowledge based on the Aristotelian ‘intellectual virtues’ of episteme, techne and phronesis. Episteme accords with the conception of knowledge as rational, positive and value free. The scientific community is typically responsible for generating this form of knowledge. Techne, or practical knowledge, relates to the understanding of what works in particular situations, it represents the knowledge formed by practitioners and others engaged in policy implementation. Finally, phronesis like techne involves experiential knowledge, but pertains more closely to ultimate ends rather than means. Phronetic knowledge centres on what matters to individuals and groups in society. In this sense, it is political and rests on the underlying values interests of the citizenry as they are engaged in the policy making process.

Examining the governance of urban interactions, it is striking the extent to which phronetic knowledge is demanded by the polity and the centrality of the role that the polity accords that knowledge in the policy making process. For example, exploring the evidential underpinnings of antisocial behaviour policies in the UK (1997-2010), Bannister and O’Sullivan (2014) find public perceptions of antisocial behaviour rather than its objective measurement to hold prominence in problem definition and by inference in the assessment of problem resolution. In his account of the lessons learnt whilst in charge of Tony Blair’s Delivery Unit, Barber (2007: 370) suggests that New Labour policy makers were keenly aware of the requirement for policies to attend to phronetic knowledge, stating: ‘the numbers are important but not enough: citizens have to see and feel the difference’. Thus, and as Tonry (2010: 388) suggests, New Labour’s policies were largely ‘expressive’, intended to acknowledge public anxieties and in so doing prevent a deterioration of morale and allay anxieties pertaining to the quality of urban life.

Not only do public preferences drive the direction of policies in this area, they also inform their character. If (perceptions of) antisocial behaviour can be understood as arising from the absence or breakdown of community relations, government could in principle formulate its policy response in a number of alternative ways in terms of the nature of the role assigned to itself or its nominated agencies for the purpose of bringing about improved intergroup relations. First, government could attempt to fully insert itself between groups, acting as a ‘mediator’ and addressing community tensions on a bilateral basis but with no direct attempt to bring the groups together. Second, government could act as a ‘facilitator’ in the search for forms of mutual engagement that would enhance intergroup civility. Third, government could act to create space (both physical and socio-political) for groups to constructively explore and address problems for themselves, essentially creating the space for this to happen while playing the role of ‘supervisor’. The final and least active alternative would see government adopting the role of ‘observer’, expecting groups to work things out for themselves (see Bannister and O’Sullivan, 2013). Reflecting on the substance of antisocial behaviour policy in the UK, Clarke *et al*. (2011) find that it has centred on the protection of victim groups, even if this has been attained through targeting perpetrators. Government agencies are firmly positioned between aggrieved groups and (perceived) perpetrators, adopting the role of ‘mediator’. Though there have been occasions where policy makers have proposed active roles for aggrieved groups in the management of antisocial behaviour, they have gained limited foothold as these groups ‘prefer’ mediated arrangements to be maintained (Home Office, 2011; Scottish Government, 2009). In overview, the character of antisocial behaviour policies have tended to support the public desire not to engage with others in an endeavour to lessen intergroup friction.

In turn, the nature of policies aimed at targeting (perceptions of) antisocial behaviour, can be characterised as supporting the dominant privilege (or competitive edge) of one group over another, in terms of their access to, control and use of urban resources. Thus, a series of new legal measures, including Antisocial Behaviour Orders and Dispersal Orders in the UK and the use of exclusion notices by public housing authorities in the US, sought to limit the presence of certain individuals or groups in public space and prohibited forms of behaviour in specific urban localities. There were also governmental projects to inculcate required levels of civility and tolerance among populations. These included good neighbour agreements signed by residents (replicating the detailed covenants and behavioural requirements in common interest developments and gated communities) and tenant reward schemes. In direct response to increasing migration and ethno-religious diversity, information packs sought to codify required standards of ‘British’ behaviour and etiquette, including queuing, attending appointments, spitting and congregating in public space (see Flint, 2009 for a full account).

In these terms, the governance of urban insecurities can be seen as an endeavour by the state as ‘mediator’ to lessen the frictions, or intolerance, arising from the propinquity of difference. Its strategy is to demand, in line with an idealised and dominant set of values (informed by the public), that those identified as ‘others’ show us respect, or risk exclusion. Khan (2007) refers to this as ‘evaluative’ respect. However, these strategies can only hold ameliorative effect on our sense of urban insecurity if the behaviour, actions and qualities of the ‘other’ are demonstrably the same as our own. For Sennett (2012: 8) this desire to ‘neutralize difference, to domesticate it, arises from anxiety about difference’, but he cautions that to follow this path will only serve to weaken our motivation to engage with difference. In sum, and viewed in light of the forces shaping planetary urbanism that deliver an ever-increasing in-place manifestation of difference, can these policies be viewed (however necessary they are deemed to be) anything other than a sticking-plaster solution? Further, is this not evidenced by the persistence of urban insecurities?

What then of the current prospect of the governance of urban insecurities? A clear conditioning factor is that of austerity. The global financial crisis of 2008 has served to usher in an era in which a significant reduction in public expenditure has been sought. In the UK, and under the Coalition Government, the ‘austerity agenda’ clearly underpinned all public service thinking between 2010 and 2015, though resource pressures pre date – and will presumably outlive – austerity. Garside and Ford (2015), drawing on data from Her Majesty’s Treasury report, identified an 18 per cent (£4 billion) reduction in criminal justice expenditure in England and Wales between 2010 and 2015. In terms of police service funding, a reduction in excess of 20 per cent was achieved (in part) by an 11 per cent reduction in the number of police officers. Here, it is important to note that the dramatic reduction in police numbers might well have been enforced by austerity, but it was certainly enabled by evidence of falling crime. Nevertheless, and in clear consequence, the governance of urban insecurities will require to be achieved with more limited means.

The UK Coalition Government approach to public policy in general and to criminal justice in particular was to adopt state re-treatment and increased marketization as a driver for reform (Garside and Ford, 2015). There are, however, evident continuities with what has gone before. There has been renewed emphasis on community engagement, community problem-solving and community mobilization (Hodgkinson and Tilley, 2011), with the intention that the community is enabled ‘to make decisions and take the lead in making change happen, with agencies available to assist’ (Home Office, 2011: 11). The precise way in which this might manifest in practical application, however, is uncertain. Or rather, it is evident that strategies aimed at tackling urban insecurities will aim to capture the public’s voice whilst the state will retain the role of ‘mediator’, or via its agents the role of ‘facilitator’. The reform of police-public relations in England and Wales under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011) presents a clear example of the intention to centre public demands in local police service delivery. Here, the public’s voice has been captured through the direct election of Police and Crime Commissioners, though the extent to which this serves to capture the ‘democratic’ voice of the citizenry and will ensure sensitivity local area needs has been questioned (Joyce, 2011; Independent Police Commission, 2013).

**Public Perceptions of Crime, Antisocial Behaviour and Incivilities**

Given the extent to which the governance of urban insecurities is built upon the capture of public perceptions, it remains an essential task to consider how and where perceptions of crime, antisocial behaviour and incivilities take form. Here, and surely, it is in the qualities of urban interaction (as broadly conceived) that we must find the answer. To live in the presence of difference, indeed the effective functioning of cities, demands that the vast majority of our encounters with difference are ephemeral. However, there are also spaces in which our encounters, of practical necessity, hold the potential to be enduring. Commercial, residential and recreational spaces all demand that we co-exist in cooperative fashion or that we act to exert influence over these spaces, to compete for their resource.

Bannister and Kearns (2013) posit that the perception of incivilities (as they find form in public survey or political action), of urban insecurities in general, captures value judgement and risk assessment, both conditioned by the qualities of urban living that inform urban interactions. Building upon the conception of civility outlined earlier, value judgements depend on whether we perceive those with whom we interact to be ‘deserving’ or ‘undeserving’ of our consideration, whilst risk assessments depend on the calculation of the consequences or impact of that interaction for our self and for others. The social and spatial fragmentation and segregation that characterise the city require that we deploy ‘stereotype’ and ‘metaphor’ as crude proxy when making these calculations. A lack of familiarity with certain social groups, underpinned by limited or fleeting direct engagement, leads us to ‘stereotype’ the *threat* posed by any encounter with members of that group based on the actual behaviour or the (media) portrayal of individuals comprising that group. In the United States, Sampson (2009) has found evidence of the stereotyping of certain groups in relation to disorder, whilst Emerson *et al.* (2001) found that Whites actually avoid living in neighbourhoods with ‘non-token’ Black populations (above 15 per cent Black) because they equate such groups with crime and low educational attainment. On the other hand, the very presence of certain social groups serves to act as a ‘metaphor’ for the relative powerlessness of the observer, and by extension of the community and the state, to exercise control through the imposition of their own values in that space, a malaise held to enable the undesired presence of other to flourish and inhibit their confrontation (Sampson 2009; Sampson and Raudenbush 2004).

This reading holds parallels with wider narratives of 'social disparagement', of the ‘othering’ of those regarded as threatening to our general welfare and detrimental to social solidarity, and serves to generate negative views of individuals on the basis of their membership of certain population groups rather than on the basis of their actual behaviour or personal worth (Young 2007; Sveinsson2009). Sennett (2012: 3), goes as far as to characterise the United States as a tribal society comprising ‘people adverse to getting along with those who differ’ and which ‘couples solidarity with others like yourself to aggression to those who differ’. In this vein, Bottoms (2006) draws on Barbelet (1998) to differentiate the ‘resentment’ we feel towards those thought to behave (or simply to be) counter to our view of established rights (the threat imposed by others) and, the ‘vengefulness’ we feel towards those perceived as dispossessing our right to levy our own values on the use of public space.

There is a vital contextual dimension to these assessments: the importance we place on urban interactions varies across the city (see *inter alia* Madanipour 2003, Watson 2006). In other words, there are locations in which our capacity to avoid contact with others is constrained, as a consequence of our employment, travel and living arrangements. Here, our assessments are informed by two key questions: *what is at stake*? And, *what are we used to*?. The former encompasses the consideration of the threat (both risk assessment and value judgement), whilst the latter encompasses our familiarity with others. Collectively, these questions probe the extent to which the presence of the ‘other’ (and their behaviours) seem ‘in’ or ‘out-of-place’, consistent or not with what we would expect and / or want to happen. The less familiarity we have with the ‘other’ the greater the likelihood that we fall back on our use of stereotype and metaphor; the greater the threat that they pose, the more likely that their presence will provoke intolerance and anxiety.

There are two outcomes to this interplay, which hold clear resonance with the strategies designed to govern urban interactions. First, that ‘resentment’ and ‘vengefulness’ can only (seemingly) be satiated through removal of the ‘other’, or that their behaviours be modified in line with our own values. Second, that the demand to enforce this expulsion, in the perceived absence of our own capacity to do so, be placed upon *formal* agents of control. However, strategies that endeavour to *impose* a mode of social interaction, which treat difference as illegitimate, clearly run the risk of perpetuating a cycle of intolerance of maintaining seemingly disproportionate levels of urban insecurity.

**Engendering Civility and Promoting Tolerance: Meaningful Interaction**

In light of our sense of urban insecurity being founded on the deployment of stereotype and metaphor, we echo Tonry and Bildsten’s (2009: 595) plea that we ‘need to find ways to bring…fractured populations together rather than to split them…to strengthen the relations between majority and minority populations rather than to weaken them’. Further, and given the assessment of threat is bound to the urban experience as competition for resource, it prompts consideration of whether and under what terms the urban experience can instead be one of communication and social cooperation (Mumford 1937; Dewey 1920). Thus, if civility and the tolerance of difference are founded on the existence of a shared language of social interaction, then how might we develop such a language? Through greater interaction with those whom we share the city, threats can lose their generic or random nature (Carvahlo and Lewis 2006) and become particular to specific events, places and individuals. Holding a greater capacity to contextualise the presence of difference (and associated behaviours) decreases our reliance upon stereotype and metaphor as interpretive tools, ameliorating our perception of threat (risk). In these terms, the perception of a threat holds, at least to an extent, a relational quality as opposed to the presence of difference (exclusively) embodying a threat.

Relatedly, engagement can stimulate mutual respect, not only demanding but also offering respect, ‘treating with respect the need perceived in another when acting together’ (Sennett, 2003: 53). Indeed, greater identification with those whom we share urban arenas can serve to provoke cooperation (Tyler and Fagan, 2008). If this reading holds true, it opens the potential that other benefits might also be accrued. In an era of austerity, communication and engagement offer the prospect of significant resource savings for those agencies charged with managing urban interactions and addressing urban insecurities. The demands placed on agencies of social control might not only be more precise, but also more limited in nature.

What then are the qualities required of engagement to stimulate these benefits? By engagement we are referring to meaningful and purposeful social interaction and collective activity with others. As we have seen, co-presence alone does not engender interaction of this nature, nor do the fleeting contacts that necessarily characterise the majority of urban encounters. Allport (1954: 281), through what has become known as the ‘contact’ hypothesis, argued that prejudice: ‘may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e. by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups’. Crucially, however, for this effect to take hold it is necessary that there is an equality of status between the groups involved and that the purpose of cooperative endeavour is directed toward the achievement of common goals. Where there is a lack of (perceived) equality, contact is likely to aggravate rather than lessen intergroup prejudice (Brewer and Gaertner, 2001). In these terms, equality of status can be understood as being founded on a ‘substantive’ conception of civility (Boyd, 2006) with its attendant citizenship rights and responsibilities. Here, the role of the state is fundamental, both in its recognition and promotion of the legitimacy of difference in the urban realm and through its capacity to provide the means and spaces for intergroup contact. Providing that the situational requirements of contact can be met, there is a substantial body of research in support of the contact hypothesis and its use to promote intergroup tolerance (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005; Hewstone, 2009).

Despite the compelling evidence that meaningful social interactrion can stimulate tolerance and promote co-operative endeavour, this prospect requires to be set against the forces shaping the experience of contemporary urbanity and its governance. Urban populations are increasingly diverse, segregated and isolated possessing (seemingly) neither the capacity nor the desire to engage in meaningful social interaction. Moreover, government would require adopting the role of ‘facilitator’ or to a lesser extent ‘supervisor’, rather than ‘mediator’. This, as we have seen, is something that governments have been reluctant to do in the governance of urban insecurities and might be less inclined to do so under the constraints of austerity. In these terms there seems little likelihood of meaningful social interaction arising organically or through government sponsorship. In other words, there appears to be a shortfall in the conditions or ‘built-in equipment’ required to enable ‘strangers to dwell in peace together’ (Jacobs, 1961: 83).

Set against these challenges, recent years have witnessed a dramatic shift in the way in which people can learn about one another and in the way in which they communicate. The Internet enables fingertip access to a vast array of materials, whilst urban populations now possess a digital voice through the advent of social media platforms. In the UK, 8 in 10 adults aged 16 or over go online, whilst 6 in ten use a smart phone (Ofcom, 2014). The widespread access to smart phones, for example, enables citizens to document their surroundings through videos, recordings and text and to communicate these instantly. People are sharing an ever-increasing proportion of their lives on these ‘digital commons’ (Omand *et al*., 2012). Of those on line in the UK, two-thirds have a presence on a social networking site, typically Facebook (Ofcom, 2014). Extending beyond personal interaction, social media has an increasing presence in political / social mobilisation and public debate. Twitter, for example, played a key role in enabling and shaping political discourse as well as in mobilising protestors in the Arab Spring (Howard *et al*., 2011).

Given the extent to which social media platforms have become a key means of communication prompts consideration of whether this form of (non-physical) interaction can serve to stimulate civility and tolerance and in so doing confront (perceptions of) urban insecurities. However, the emergent literatures tend to pay greater attention to the Internet and social media as a resource to perpetrate crime and engender social disharmony. The Office for National Statistics (2015), for example, calculated that there were 2.5 million cybercrimes in England and Wales in 2014, whereas social media platforms were accused of fuelling the London riots of 2011 (Halliday, 2012) and have been central to global controversies over Charlie Hebdo, the burning of the Koran and disruption of remembrance services. Social media is becoming intertwined with a new phenomenon within conceptualisations of incivility and intolerance, namely ‘offensiveness’. That said, the extent to which offensiveness should be recognised as a form of incivility and subject to governmental regulation is disputed (Waiton, 2013). There is evidence that mass-mediated interaction can promote beneficial changes to public perception. Shiappa et al., (2005), for example, found that ‘parasocial’ or mass-mediated contact held the capacity to change public beliefs about gay men and transvestites, lowering pre-existing levels of prejudice. It is also clear however that the public, reflecting physical practices of confinement, insulation and exclusion, tend to engage in intragroup rather than intergroup contact. Morozov (2012), for example and reflecting on the changing use of the Internet and social media, believes that the dominance of these media by corporations such as Apple, Google and Facebook is serving to narrow exploration and intergroup contact. Thus and whilst Facebook serves to remove anonymity and promote social interaction, such interaction is founded on intragroup communication.

To date, the uptake of social media in the governance of urban insecurities has been both experimental and haphazard. Few approaches are grounded in formal strategies with clearly articulated objectives or protocols for deployment and data handling, yet a greater number of applications are emergent (Denef *et al*., 2012). In this context, the Norwegian police use a one-way twitter feed to communicate with citizens, whilst in the Netherlands, public security practitioners use a multi-media platform (CrowdSense, 2015) in an endeavour to mitigate the risks associated with large scale social gatherings. There is also clear resonance with the nature of approach typically adopted by the state in the governance of physical interactions, inserting itself as ‘mediator’ and protecting victim groups through targeting perpetrators. For example, the media has been used to advance new mechanisms of using public shaming as a mechanism of deterrence, including publicising individuals subject to Antisocial Behaviour Orders in the UK or lists of individuals banned from US public housing. These techniques have also increasingly been used by commercial transport companies to shame fare dodgers (Flint and Powell, 2009: Croll, 2009). Recently, Los Angeles has considered naming and effectively ‘drought shaming’ residents who use a disproportionate amount of water (Walters, 2015). In Scotland, the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 includes a specific focus on prohibiting sectarian, homophobic or racist content in internet communications. In overview, whilst the advent of and engagement with new communication technologies holds the potential to reframe urban encounters, supporting interactions that are not bounded in space, the direction of travel for typical users bears relation to traditional physical and socially bounded modes of interaction. New communication technologies are also creating new social problems, holding influence on how uncivil or antisocial behaviour are conceived. Non-physical interaction via communication technologies can also manifest in physical realities. Governing authorities are moving to insert themselves in this arena, though the direction of travel here also bears relation to traditional modes of the governance of urban insecurities.

**Conclusions**

Cities are vital to the conceptualisation and manifestations of civility, tolerance and perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime. However the encounters with difference that characterise the propinquity of urban experience need to be situated within a wider contemporary planetary urbanism fundamentally transforming social connectivity and conflict. There is evidence that new forms of social Darwinism are driving urban insecurities in which urban encounters with diversity are defined by the perceived incivility of other groups or where the sites for such encounters are systemically reduced by displacement, segregation and the exclusion of ‘others’ through physical, legal, political and cultural mechanisms. New technologies of connectivity within the hyper-diversity of planetary urbanism do not, inherently, necessitate an acceleration of Darwinist competition or conflict. They could, alternatively, generate new forms of cooperation and tolerance as envisaged by Dewey (1920) and captured in the concept of a global noosphere of hyper-connectivity. However, this would require a return to Boyd’s (2006) emphasis on a substantive reading of civility characterised by inclusive citizenship and forms of urban encounter underpinned by greater levels of equality between groups. The contemporary governance of urban diversity and civility is complex and ambiguous; in which some governmental projects to foster propinquity between groups are countered by state ambivalence towards, or indeed proactive facilitation of, urban forces driving intolerance and conflict.

What is evident is that governmental projects to avoid the complexity and challenges of managing hyper-diversity through reducing the visibility or prominence of such diversity in urban arenas and are insufficient. It is equally fanciful for the state to hope that other actors will autonomously resolve conflicts and generate the civil city. At present we appear trapped in a cycle in which the primacy of phronesis as a driver of governmental action, at national and city scales, results in the cumulative fears of urban populations and elites about diversity being mirrored back and forth and thereby intensified. Governments respond to the alleged fears of the citizenry and, in turn the discourses and policies of government heighten the fears of urban residents. In such a scenario, the relatively strong evidence for recent declines in the levels of urban crime and in many cities, and the longer-term historical fall in urban inter-personal violence and forms of intolerance, will not translate into popular public perceptions of safer cities. Without achieving such a new understanding, the calculations of risk involved in urban encounters with difference will continue to be founded on (often unwarranted) fears, inculcating acts of avoidance and separation, rather than generating the meaningful interactions the civil city requires.

**Selected Further Reading**

BOYD, R. (2006) ‘The Value of Civility?’ *Urban Studies*, 43(5/6): 879-902 .

Provides an excellent discussion of the conceptualisation of urban civility, and the other papers in this issue of the journal are also on urban (in)civility.

WYLY, E. (2015) ‘Gentrification on the planetary urban frontier: The evolution of Turner’s noosphere’, Urban Studies, 52(14): 2515-2550.

Provides a full discussion of many of the concepts used in this chapter.

BANNISTER, J. AND KEARNS, A. (2013) ‘The function and foundations of urban tolerance: encountering and engaging with difference in the city’, Urban Studies, 50 (13): 2700-2717.

Provides a conceptualization of how urban tolerance may be understood and how it is manifested in cities.

## SENNETT, R. (2012) Together: The Rituals, Pleasure and Politics of Cooperation. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Explores the tendency for society to become ever more complicated while people tend socially to avoid people unlike themselves. It interrogates how this situation has arisen and what might be done about it.

FLINT, J. (2009) ‘Cultures, Ghettos and Camps: Sites of Exception and Antagonism in the City’, Housing Studies, 24(4): 417-432.

Examines an increasing racial and religious segregation and the potential of urban policy to facilitate civility between diverse populations.

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