Brown University
Urban Studies Program

Senior Honors
&
Capstone
Presentations

April 16, 2021
2021
Program in Urban Studies
Senior Presentations

Hosted by Professor Samuel Zip,
Director of Urban Studies
Professor of American Studies and Urban Studies

WELCOME

HONORS THESIS PRESENTATIONS

SENIOR CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS

CLOSING REMARKS
Honors Thesis Candidates

JEREMY BERMAN
“Los Angeles and Shared Scooters: A Regulatory and Infrastructural Experiment”

Los Angeles recently welcomed over 17,000 shared electric scooters to the city with the hope that they would have a positive impact on pollution, traffic, and equity, while providing a valuable solution to the first-mile last-mile (FMLM) transportation conundrum. However, these benefits have not materialized. Instead, Los Angeles has found itself embroiled in a high-stakes silent conflict over regulations with scooter companies. This thesis examines a promising path forward: mobility hubs, a type of infrastructure that brings together shared transportation options at transit stations. By understanding the reasons for mobility hub success in encouraging FMLM trips, Los Angeles can reshape its regulations to meet more of its scooter-related goals.

First Thesis Advisor: Professor Sandy Zipp, Associate Professor of American Studies and Urban Studies, Director of Urban Studies
Second Thesis Advisor: Kurt Teichert, Senior Lecturer in Environment and Society

ALICIA MIES

My thesis is an examination of Connecticut’s Department of Children and Families, the state’s child welfare agency, and how it operated pre-pandemic, how it adapted to COVID, and how it has impacted the parents and children in its care. This investigation will reveal that DCF has always been an expansive, bureaucratic agency with the power to separate children from their parents and that, because of this enormous capability, for years many parents have expressed a feeling of unfairness and lack of care when interacting with DCF. After the pandemic broke out, the state of Connecticut and DCF wielded executive power and prohibited parents and children from seeing each other in person, demonstrating how DCF is a state organization with the overwhelming power to block children from seeing their biological parents indefinitely in an emergency. Ultimately, I aim to show that the pandemic exacerbated DCF’s structural issues and made clear the true jurisdiction and power imbalance of Connecticut’s child welfare system.
First Thesis Advisor: Professor Rebecca Carter, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Urban Studies
Second Thesis Advisor: Dean Julie Plaut, Director of Engaged Scholarship, Swearer Center / Assistant Dean of the College

Senior Capstones 2021

SAMAHRIA ALPERN: “Stigma in the City: The impact of criminal-legal system involvement on individual and community well-being”


SIOBHAN BRENNAN: “Activism and the Subway: Visions of a Just City”

CHRISTOPHER CHIAH: “Starcity San Jose – Rising Star or False Ray of Hope”

YUNJOUNG “YUNNI” Cho: “Power of Ornamentation in Shaping Culture Identity”

JAAP DE JONG: “Combatting the Consequences of COVID on Educational Inequity in South-East Amsterdam”

ILANA EMANUEL: “Commemoration in Berlin, Germany”

ANNELISE ERNST: “Illinois Court Fines and Fees: A Fine Line Between Accountability and Oppression”

ELIZA HICKS: “AS220 Youth’s Creation of a Safe Space”

ELLIE KOSCHIK: “Connecting Community-based Organizations with Residents: Mapping Toolkits for South Providence”

JACK NELSON: “The Stories We Tell Ourselves About Ourselves: Urban Praxis as a Narrator to American Cultural Division”

TANAY NUNNA: “Risk Factors for Renter Housing Instability: A Qualitative Analysis of Renters and Rental Property Owners in RI.”

NATHANIEL OSTRER: “A House Divided: A Perspective on the Rural-Urban Divide in American Culture”

MIMI SANFORD: “Communities in Providence, RI Most at Risk of Experiencing Homelessness”

CHERILYN TAN: “Sound, Movement + Arts: Building Towards a Just City”