



Housing Across Borders: Mexican and U.S. Housing in Perspective

May 26, 2017
San Diego, California

Recent crises in the U.S. and Mexican housing sectors have laid bare the interconnected economic, political, and cultural significance of housing. The 2007 crash of the U.S. housing market resulted from an increased entanglement of the home with complex financial products. In Mexico, the 1992 reform of the state housing fund for workers into a mortgage finance institution fueled the rapid expansion of a market in so-called “social interest” housing, but it also strained municipal infrastructures, placed borrowers at risk of being underwater, and led to a home abandonment crisis. Though they differ in detail, both crises are indicative of a narrow policy focus on housing as a financialized commodity and both have had far-reaching effects in the global economy, local communities, and the lives of homeowners.

Mexican and U.S. housing markets are traditionally understood to operate as discrete units, but as these recent crises highlight, housing markets are intertwined with people and processes beyond local geographies. We hold that the U.S. and Mexican housing sectors in particular are connected by the movement of people, money, policies, and ideas. Taking into consideration their shared histories, we propose thinking about the United States and Mexico together, in order to extract lessons from looking at the experiences of both countries against each other, and as a provocation that can lead us to testing our ideas about what housing and city mean. How have housing models originating in the U.S. shaped assumptions about and policy implementation in Mexico? How are the two markets linked through the movement of people and investments? Most of all, we ask the question of what can be learned by considering the connectedness of these housing markets, and through the experiences of planners, politicians, and residents in each country?

This conference explores these connections by putting practitioners and interdisciplinary scholars of the U.S. and Mexico into conversation. To this end, the conference will be composed of: two traditional panels in which scholars share their work in presentation form, two roundtable discussions dealing with the panel themes, and one roundtable discussion among planners, developers, and practitioners from the San Diego-Tijuana region. The potential for connections and comparisons will be drawn out in roundtables and in informal discussions during the conference.

The conference will take place on Friday, May 26, 2017 at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego. Please email [Georgia Hartman ghartman@uci.edu](mailto:Georgia.Hartman@uci.edu) and [Emilio de Antuñano emilio1@uchicago.edu](mailto:Emilio.deAntuñano@uchicago.edu) with inquiries.

Session 1 - Home and Patrimony: Housing and Belonging in the U.S. and Mexico

The home is central to the economic and affective well being of those that dwell within it. It is the material space from which household members construct personal meaning, where kin and gender relations are articulated, and it provides the foundation from which household economic activities are structured. Recognizing the home’s multiple meanings and functions, this panel turns on two key issues. First, we seek to understand how cultural ideas about family, home, economy, and community imbue a sense of belonging and meaning associated with the home. In short, how is the cultural significance of home, family and community constructed, and in what ways does it vary across U.S. and Mexican contexts? Second, we ask how changes to the legal and financial relationship of people to their home (i.e. zoning, legal entitlement, mortgaging, etc.) shape their ability to feel “at home” and develop a sense of belonging in an abode and a community. How might changes in affective relations associated with the home in turn shape broader geographic and community trends (i.e. security, infrastructure, urban growth, etc.)? This panel interrogates the often neglected affective and cultural dimensions of legal and economic reforms and considers their implications for the broader communities in which they arise.

Session 2 - Designing the City: Housing Policy, Urban Planning, and Rights

Housing policies are embedded with normative ideas about what cities are, how they ought to work, and residents' rights to home and city. These ideas change continuously. The direct provision of housing as a social good or constitutional right, prominent in the 1960s and 70s, was replaced in the 1980s and 90s by thinking about the home as a commodity regulated by the market. This paradigmatic shift is reflected in the cessation of direct state building activities and the emergence of government policies aimed at harnessing market forces in the provision of housing. Thinking about housing as a right, as a "social good," or as a commodity shapes government policy, impacting patterns of urban development and influencing the lives of urban residents. How do understandings of housing—as a right or as a commodity—shape cities, communities, and the homes themselves? These ways of thinking about housing are both indicative of and instrumental to broader narratives structuring national belonging and political rights. In Mexico, for example, housing was traditionally understood as a right descended from the country's revolutionary struggle. In the United States, homeownership is a central component of the American Dream, itself embedded with liberal values of individualism and private property. We therefore ask, how does the idea of homeownership—as private property, as dream, as patrimony, as right—play into ideas of the nation and civil belonging? By analyzing the relationship between housing, broader urban policies, and citizenship, this panel interrogates how ideas of housing and rights to housing materialize in the built environment and shape the lives of people dwelling within it.

Session 3 - Housing in Practice: The Everyday Realities of Housing in the U.S. and Mexico

Scholars analyze, debate, and theorize housing policies and housing markets. But their idealized notions are often a far cry from the cumbersome realities encountered by those administering and implementing policy on the ground. In keeping with renewed interest in the day-to-day realities of administrators and the everyday workings of government, this panel aims to open dialogue with those involved in the quotidian realities of mortgage processing, housing regulation, planning, and urban development. How does the housing market actually function for its participants in everyday practice? What are the obstacles faced by the people actively enforcing and navigating federal, state, and municipal housing policies? And how do these housing practitioners make sense of the constraints and opportunities of their work? This panel brings together housing practitioners from Mexico and the United States to discuss the challenges they face and the small victories they achieve on a daily basis. What kinds of debates, analysis, and theorizations are rendered by those most intimately involved with the daily realities of the housing market?

May 26, 2017 Agenda

- 8 – 9 a.m. **Continental breakfast**
- 9 – 9:10 a.m. **Welcome**
Georgia Hartman, Research Fellow, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UC San Diego
Emilio de Antuñano, Research Fellow, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UC San Diego
- 9:10 – 9:30 a.m. **Opening Remarks**
Peter M. Ward, Professor of Public Affairs and Sociology, University of Texas at Austin
- 9:30 – 11 a.m. **Panel 1: Home and Patrimony: Housing and Belonging in the U.S. and Mexico**
“Becoming Blight: Property and Belonging in Post-Katrina New Orleans”
Sean Mallin, Junior Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine
“Foreclosure: Loss and Resistance among Maya Migrants in Cancún”
Bianet Castellanos, Associate Professor of American Studies, University of Minnesota
“In Property We Trust: Making and Unmaking Home in the Mexican Periphery”
Inés Escobar González, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago
“¡VIVAMOS EN EL NORTE!: Housing Design Alternatives in Mexican-American Neighborhoods”
Mick Kennedy, Lecturer, Department of Architecture, University of Michigan
Jonathan Rule, Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture, University of Michigan
- 11 – 11:15 a.m. **Coffee Break**
- 11:15 a.m. –
12:15 p.m. **Roundtable Discussion - Home and Patrimony**
Noelle Stout, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, New York University
Sarah Lopez, Assistant Professor of Architecture, University of Texas at Austin
Paulina Campos, Director, Fundación Hogares
Pablo Landa
- 12:15 p.m. –
1:15 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. **Panel - Designing the City: Housing Policy, Urban Planning and Rights**
“From Casa Mínima to Casa Propia: State-Sponsored Housing and the Changing Meaning of the Home”
Sarah Selvidge, Visiting Lecturer, Department of History, University of California, Berkeley
“The Homeownership Complex and the Making of U.S. Housing Policy”
Elizabeth Youngling, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
“Reclaiming ‘Self-Help’ within Rio Grande Valley Organizing”
Danielle Zoe Rivera, Assistant Professor, Program in Environmental Design, University of Colorado, Boulder
“Design for Inequity: Civil Society’s Pursuit of Formal Housing in Mexico City”
Paulina Reyes, Michigan Mellon Design Fellow, Department of Architecture, University of Michigan
- 2:45 – 3 p.m. **Coffee Break**
- 3 – 4 p.m. **Roundtable Discussion - Designing the City**
Peter M. Ward, Professor of Public Affairs and Sociology, University of Texas at Austin
Paavo Monkkonen Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles
Nancy Kwak, Associate Professor, Department of History, UC San Diego
Lawrence Herzog, Professor, Department of City Planning, San Diego State University
- 4:15 – 5:30 p.m. **Roundtable Discussion -
Housing in Practice: Administration and the Everyday Reality of Housing in the U.S. and Mexico**
Stephen Russell, Executive Director, San Diego Housing Federation
Nico Calavita, Professor Emeritus, Department of City Planning, San Diego State University

Speaker Bios

Emilio de Antuñano

Emilio de Antuñano is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Chicago. He received his B.A. in international relations from El Colegio de México. His research focuses on cities, urban planning and architecture, as well as the relationship between the social sciences, urban populations and state institutions during the 20th century. In his dissertation, de Antuñano analyzes the political, infrastructural and cultural challenges urban growth posed for different groups in Mexico City throughout the 20th century. He describes how planners, government officials, political brokers and associations of poor residents together built the megalopolis that Mexico City became.

Nico Calavita

Nico Calavita is Professor Emeritus in the Department of City Planning at San Diego State University. Calavita's areas of interest have included affordable housing and community development, growth management, politics of growth, comparative planning and land value recapture. His first article on Inclusionary Housing, "Inclusionary Housing in California: The Experience of Two Decades," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, (co-authored with Ken Grimes), was published in 1998 and was cited in the recent (2015) California Supreme Court decision, *California Building Association vs. City of San Jose* that upheld the power of localities to enact IH in CA. He also helped write the amicus brief for the City of San Jose. His latest publication on Inclusionary Housing is the 2010 book, *Inclusionary Housing in International Perspective: Affordable Housing, Social Inclusion, and Land Value Recapture* that he co-authored with Alan Mallach and that was published by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Currently Calavita is working with the East Bay Housing Organizations and the City of Berkeley to implement land value capture in the Bay Area as a mechanism to produce affordable housing and other community benefits. As part of that collaboration he has co-authored a White Paper on The Theory, Economy and Practice of Public Benefits Zoning for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission of the San Francisco Bay Area. Another publication on the subject of value capture, "Value Capture and Community Benefits" appeared in the June 2015 issue of *Zoning Practice*, a publication of the American Planning Association. In 2016 he was awarded the Marylin Gittel Activist Scholar Award by the Urban Affairs Association.

Paulina Campos

Paulina Campos has a B.A. in Economics from ITAM and a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She worked as an associate at Standard & Poor's, where Paulina was responsible of rating state and local governments in Latin America and Europe. As a manager at Infonavit's Sustainability Division, Paulina Campos developed credit products and social programs to increase the quality of life of credit holders. Additionally, Paulina established partnerships with local governments, and national and international universities to strengthen the affordable housing public policy. Currently, she is the CEO of Fundacion Hogares, a nonprofit created with seed capital from Infonavit, aimed at increasing social participation and engagement in affordable housing neighborhoods. Under Paulina's leadership, Fundacion Hogares has designed and executed high-impact community building programs with a national scope. As a result, Fundacion Hogares ranks as the 10th largest nonprofit in Mexico by number of beneficiaries. Paulina Campos has been recognized as a Social Entrepreneur by Ashoka, UBS, and the Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey.

Bianet Castellanos

Bianet Castellanos teaches American studies at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *A Return to Servitude: Maya Migration and the Tourist Trade in Cancún* (University of Minnesota Press 2010) and coeditor of *Comparative Indigenities of the Américas: Toward a Hemispheric Approach* (University of Arizona Press 2012).

Inés Escobar González

Inés Escobar González received her B.A. from Trinity College at the University of Cambridge (2010) and an Anthropology Master's in Research from University College London (2011). Currently, she is a Ph.D. Candidate in the University of Chicago's Anthropology Department. Her research aims to understand the precise ways in which mortgages are impacting the lives, livelihoods, and place-making practices of low-income Mexicans, all within the transition from informality to finance-driven 'formal' homeownership. She has also consulted for the Inter-American Conference on Social Security

and co-authored the Mexican Background Paper for the 2013 World Development Report. Selected honors include the Cambridge Overseas Trust Scholarship, a Distinction in Anthropology from University College London, and the Mexican Council for Science and Technology Fellowship.

Georgia Hartman

Georgia Hartman is a Visiting Fellow at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego and a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine. Her dissertation research examines the impact of land and housing policy reform on the urban environment in Cancún, Mexico. Based on 12 months of ethnographic research, she analyzes new moral claims about property organized through the market—rather than the state—and examines their implications for urban space and the people who dwell in it.

Lawrence Herzog

Lawrence Herzog (Ph.D.), born in New York City, is a writer, photographer and professor of city planning in the School of Public Affairs at San Diego State University, San Diego, California. He has written or edited 10 books on urban planning, design and global/cross-border development, including: *Global Suburbs: Urban Sprawl from the Rio Grande to Rio de Janeiro* (Routledge, 2015); *Return to the Center* (University of Texas Press, 2006) and *From Aztec to High Tech* (Johns Hopkins, 1999). Herzog has been a Fulbright Scholar in Peru and the United Kingdom, an international planning consultant to the U.S. Agency for International Development (U.S. A.I.D.) in Peru and Bolivia, and has lectured at universities in Mexico, Peru, Brazil, France, Spain, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, and the United Kingdom. In 2015, he was a TED speaker at the TEDx Monumento event on the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego/Tijuana.

Mick Kennedy

Mick Kennedy is a native of Houston, Texas, where he received his undergraduate training in Small Engine Repair at the Harris County Community College. He received his graduate architectural degree from the University of Texas at Austin and is a practicing architect in Texas and in Michigan where he teaches housing design, furniture design and building construction and fabrication courses at the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture. His design practice focuses on community design-build projects in Southwest Detroit and Texas. Along with Maria Cotera, he was a founding member of El Museo del Norte in Detroit and continues to serve on their Board. Along with his partner, Mike Smith, he founded the office Two Guys from Texas in Austin. Their current work includes the design and construction of micro houses for the homeless in East Austin. When he isn't working he plays the accordion.

Nancy Kwak

Nancy Kwak is an associate professor of history at UC San Diego. She is interested in the evolution of cities and urban spaces in the twentieth century, and wrote her first book, *A World of Homeowners: American Power and the Politics of Housing Aid*, on the connections between U.S. housing policy and development aid around the globe. Kwak is currently working on informality in industrial and postindustrial urban spaces.

Pablo Landa

Pablo Landa earned his Ph.D. in anthropology from Princeton University in 2015. His dissertation considers housing and social security policies from the modern era in Mexico as they connect to contemporary urban and political configurations. In 2016, he was the curator of Mexico's pavilion in the Venice Architecture Biennale. Earlier, he curated *Mario Pani, architecture in process*, a retrospective that meditates on the social and cultural dimensions of major infrastructure projects from 20th century Mexico. The show was presented in Monterrey's Contemporary Art Museum (MARCO) in 2014, and in Puebla's Museo Amparo in 2016. He is currently working on an exhibition on industrial complexes and worker's housing in Monterrey.

Sarah Lopez

Sarah Lopez, a built environment historian and migration scholar, is an assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin, and a Princeton-Mellon Fellow in Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities. Lopez' book, *The Remittance Landscape: The Spaces of Migration in Rural Mexico and Urban USA*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 2015. She is currently working on two projects. Her first is an investigation of the architecture of immigrant detention facilities in Texas. A portion of this research is currently on view in the exhibit *States of Incarceration*, which is traveling

in the U.S. and Europe for the next three years. This exhibit, organized by the Humanities Action Lab at the New School of Social Research, is the culmination of twenty professors' research and teaching about incarceration in the U.S. Lopez' second project is an examination of the relationship between thirty years of continuous migration between Mexico and the US and the development of an informal binational construction industry on both sides of the border. Her work has been reviewed on NPR, WBEZ, and she has published in the Harvard Design Magazine, the Harvard Review of Latin America, and Buildings and Landscapes, among other journals.

Sean Mallin

Sean Mallin is a junior fellow in anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, and the managing editor of *American Anthropologist*. He received his PhD in cultural anthropology from UC Irvine in 2016. His dissertation explored the politics of property and belonging in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Paavo Monkkonen

Paavo Monkkonen is Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. He studies the ways policies and markets shape urban development and social segregation in cities around the world and teaches courses on housing markets and policy, applied microeconomics, research methods, and global urban segregation. He is coordinator of the Regional and International Development Concentration, a Faculty Cluster Leader for the Global Public Affairs Initiative, and Senior Housing Fellow at the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies. His current research includes a comparative analysis of socio-economic segregation in 13 countries, an examination of the relationship between neighborhood social mix and social networks in Hong Kong, an evaluation of the role of urban form in agglomeration economies internationally, and a study of the land market impacts of Mexico City's new airport. Paavo completed a Master of Public Policy at the School of Public Affairs at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning at the University of California, Berkeley. He was previously Assistant Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Hong Kong from 2009 to 2012.

Paulina Reyes

Paulina Reyes is a Design Fellow with the Michigan-Mellon Project on Egalitarianism and the Metropolis. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Carnegie Mellon University. Her undergraduate thesis focused on the impact of the US/Mexico border fence on bi-national flow, and proposed polemical alternatives to its design. Upon graduation, she spent a year living in Mexico City as a Fulbright Fellow, during which she developed a research project centered on the integration of water sustainability in the design of low-income public housing. Subsequently, she engaged in fieldwork with local architects, NGOs, and grassroots political groups to form the basis of the work, and continues to develop the project with the Michigan-Mellon program, including a focus on informal development and the role of Mexican civil society in advocating for public housing through the government.

Danielle Rivera

Danielle Rivera is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Design at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she teaches urban planning and architecture. Rivera examines informal processes and post-colonial views of planning and design. These professional and theoretical inquiries frequently draw her to study community organizing, environmental justice, and social movements. Rivera's current work examines low-income Latino/a communities, primarily Mexican-American and Puerto Rican communities, studying how their histories of informal planning subvert common narratives within planning theory. Rivera holds a Ph.D. in Urban Planning from the University of Michigan, a Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelor of Architecture from The Pennsylvania State University.

Jonathan Rule

Jonathan Rule is an assistant professor of practice at the University of Michigan, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning where he teaches in the areas of representation, fabrication, construction and design. He has been practicing architecture in Spain since 2008 where he is a registered architect with the Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de la Region de Murcia and is a co-founder of the studio Morcillo Pallares + Rule Arquitectos. The practice incorporates a wide range of typologies and scales in architecture and urban design and has won open design competitions in both Spain and the United States. The practices projects include, Museo de la Enclave de la Muralla MUDEM, a performing arts center for the Region of Murcia, a wine museum in Jumilla and "the Waterfall", a public space installation on the

suspension bridge of Amposta. In addition to the practice, his research focuses on materials, construction systems and building design and technology. Rule received a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the State University of New York at Buffalo, a Master in Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a Professional Homologation from the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid - ETSAM.

Stephen Russell

Stephen Russell is the Executive Director of the San Diego Housing Federation. A 2005 graduate of the NewSchool of Architecture & Design, Russell has a 20-year history working in community and economic development in the Mid-City region of San Diego. He served as Executive Director of the El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement District, where he was responsible for implementing an economic development strategy for an aging commercial district. He later served as an advisor to then-San Diego City Councilmember Toni Atkins on issues related to redevelopment, infrastructure financing, small business support, and the City's General Plan (the "City of Villages".) Since then he has served as volunteer board member and President of the City Heights Community Development Corporation, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing affordable housing, employment opportunities, and quality neighborhoods in the community of City Heights. Stephen has served on the NewSchool Foundation Board since 2009 and as President of the Board since 2011. Prior to joining the Federation as its Executive Director, Stephen was a member of the firm Platt/Whitelaw Architects, Inc., a full-service architecture firm specializing in sustainable design.

Sarah Selvidge

Sarah Selvidge is currently a lecturer at UC Berkeley, where she earned her PhD in History in 2015 and at Stanford University. Her book project, *Modernism and Miracles: From Radical Architecture to Mortgage Finance in Mexico* examines the changing relationship between federal housing policy and urban landscapes in twentieth-century Mexico. Her scholarly interests include: urban services and infrastructure (especially housing and garbage), public space, architecture and the built environment, avant-garde culture, and film.

Noelle Stout

Noelle Stout is an Associate Professor of Anthropology for the Graduate Program in Culture and Media in the Department of Anthropology at New York University. As a cultural and visual anthropologist, she researches, writes about, and creates media projects that explore how economic imaginaries affect the intimacies of daily life, with a focus on contemporary Cuba and the United States. In 2016-17 academic year, she is a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University and the American Council of Learned Societies where she is completing her book *Bound by Default: Homeowners, Lenders, and the Enduring Debts of the U.S. Foreclosure Crisis* (UC Press). Her first book *After Love: Queer Intimacy and Erotic Economies in Post Soviet Cuba* (Duke 2014) illuminates how everyday efforts to imagine and enact market reforms shape queer desire and subjectivity. Her current work examines the role of unpaid debt in fostering social obligations in California's Sacramento Valley.

Peter M. Ward

Peter M. Ward held senior teaching and research positions in geography at University College London and at the University of Cambridge before joining the faculty of The University of Texas at Austin in 1991. He is a professor in the LBJ School of Public Affairs and in the College of Liberal Arts' Department of Sociology, where he holds the C.B. Smith Sr. Centennial Chair #1 in U.S.-Mexico Relations. Between 2002 and 2007 he served as editor-in-chief of the *Latin American Research Review*. He is best known for his work on low-income housing and self-help in Mexico and in Latin America, and for his work on similar informal settlements (colonias) in Texas and the southern United States. He has also published extensively on social policy, democratization and governance, Mexican politics and megacities (most notably Mexico City). His most recent work is an 11-city (nine-country) Latin American Housing Network study prepared for the U.N.-Habitat III summit in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016. He has served as an adviser to various Mexican government leaders, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi, Kenya.