

Housing Activism: Beyond the West

International conference to be held at the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES), Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden.

About

Call for papers

The most evident expressions of neoliberalization are found in the urban sphere. Cities have become competitors for investment and arenas for market-oriented growth. Within the city, housing has been particularly affected by policies that propagate competitiveness by promoting marketization, decentralization, privatization and deregulation. The effects of neoliberalization in specific local contexts differ in time, space, degree, impact, and the degree and form of contestation. Moreover, housing activism and housing struggles have been researched unevenly across the world. The aim of this conference is to contribute to levelling these differences by focusing on non-Western contexts, and in particular on unexplored gaps in the field of housing activism.

This conference looks more closely into how housing activism has developed in under-studied areas in Europe, South America, Asia and Africa, and compares them to well-studied developments in Western contexts (specifically in Western Europe and North America). By shedding light on under-researched geographical areas, we aim to question conventional, essentializing distinctions between East and West, and North and South, while considering the specific historical, cultural, political and economic contexts within which housing activism emerges. Consequently, our ambition is to bring about dialogue between studies from different cultural and political contexts in order to broaden the understanding of housing activism from a comparative perspective.

We are interested in how neoliberalization is contested at grassroots levels in the field of housing. Therefore, we invite contributions that discuss conditions for the emergence of such contestation, strategies of action, use of media technologies, and the successes and failures of housing activists. We welcome contributions from scholars with different interdisciplinary backgrounds on the following topics:

- Historical perspectives on housing activism, looking at the specificity of the local context, but placing it in comparative perspective.
- Under-researched forms of activism in the field of housing, i.e. radical, informal, spontaneous, non-institutionalized and marginalized forms of activism.
- Coalition-making and cooperation practices among housing activists, emphasizing facilitators and obstacles in collaborations.
- Media in the context of housing activism: materiality, practices and strategies.

Comparative research with theory-developing ambitions will be given priority. However, we are also open to contributions dealing with specific, single cases, as the format of the conference will be designed to facilitate discussions and comparisons.

The conference will also host a panel on housing activism with representatives/activists from networks and organizations working in different countries with housing issues.

Keynote speakers

Margit Mayer, Center for Metropolitan Studies:

“Housing struggles in the context of neoliberalization”

Chris Pickvance, University of Kent:
“*Going behind the housing label*”

Practicalities and deadlines

We aim for a fairly small conference, with a limited number of participants, to allow for a rich and engaging atmosphere and fruitful exchanges between all presented papers. Presenters are expected to present a full original paper (around 8,000 words), to be circulated among all participants before the conference. All papers will have designated discussants and all participants should expect to act as discussants of others’ papers. Presenters and other participants are expected to attend both days of the conference.

The conference is free of charge and participants with accepted papers may be eligible for an accommodation contribution (covering two nights at a specific hotel). If you would like to apply for this contribution, please indicate this in your application and explain why it would be helpful to you. To participate without a paper, indicate your interest by **April 15th 2016**.

Individual papers will, upon acceptance, be arranged into suitable panels by the organizers. Each proposal should include:

- A 300-500 word abstract with keywords
- a short bio (maximum 300 words) and contact details.

Please send your proposal to housing_activism_conference@sh.se

Deadline for submission of paper proposals: **31st January 2016**.

Notification of acceptance: **29th February 2016**.

Submission of full paper: **6th May 2016**.

For more information, visit: www.sh.se/housing_activism_conference

Conference organisers:

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Anne Kaun, PhD

Södertörn University (Media and Communication Studies)