

Visions of the city: the rise and fall of social housing/gentrification/the making of the ‘creative city’

Social historians have often focused on cities to study up-close the impact of larger social processes like (de-)industrialisation or the establishment of the welfare state on “ordinary” people’s social relations. Social housing, which after relatively modest beginnings in the early twentieth century was in Western countries expanded considerably after 1945 before the initial enthusiasm and state investment declined in the 1970/80s, is one possible topic to study in detail the making and experience of society, gentrification as well as the more recent gospel of the ‘creative city’ (and the accompanying privatisation of housing) are others.

- Focusing on town planning and housing policy, a master project could study the visions of society such planning entailed and assess their consequences for people’s lives. There is a rich historiography on social housing in particular which should make it relative easy to define a feasible and fruitful project. Students may start from the introduction by Shane Ewen, *What is urban history?*, Cambridge: Polity Press 2016, and/or the older book by Alison Ravetz, *Council housing and culture: the history of a social experiment*, London: Routledge 2001.
- Aspects of gentrification have been usefully explored in an article by Joe Moran (*Early cultures of gentrification, 1955-1980*, in: *Journal of Urban History* 34, 1 (2007), 101-21) with the focus on London. A research project could take Moran’s paper as guidance to explore the topic for Oslo, working with local archives.
- A polemical article by Jamie Peck (*Struggling with the creative class*, in: *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29, 4 (2005), 740-770) provides perspectives on the “creative city”. Annual bibliographies published in the leading journal ‘Urban History’ offer an overview of research in the field of urban history.

Theses may be written in English or Norwegian, and local projects making use of Norwegian sources are strongly encouraged.