

Dean's Roundup: 10 March 2017

Roundup: *Ceiling function*, the mathematical operation of rounding a number up to the next higher integer.

Roundup: a term in American English referring to the process of gathering animals into an area, known as a "Muster" in Australia.

Rounding up: when a helmsman cannot control a boat and it heads into the wind

Roundup: the plan for an invasion of northern France by Allied forces during World War II (Wikipedia)

Dean's Roundup: part blog, part bulletin; part honour roll, part curatorial [cu¹ra-to'ri-al (ky^{oo}r^{ee}-tô^{er}-el, -tô^{er}-) n. nounised by the Dean from curator + editorial]

Dear All,

Yesterday I attended a most intriguing research seminar given by K C Wong in the Department of Real Estate and Construction, entitled, 'When does the bad drive out the good?'. The title echos the 16th century 'Gresham's Law' (also called 'Copernicus Law' after the famous astronomer), which predicts that where there are two currencies in an economy, the currency with the lower value will drive out the more valuable one because people will keep the more valuable (coins with higher silver content for example) and use the other one for exchange. One of KC's points of discussion was the rules that arise to prevent bad commodities driving out good commodities (money is a commodity just as melons or cherries are). Any grocery stall of melons and cherries will contain good and bad fruit. Can we predict how melons and cherries will be sold in the interest of pricing accurately according to value? And can we predict which 'cheating' strategies will emerge under different conditions relating to the cost of measuring quality? One way to answer this is to think about the cost of monitoring quality – the cost to the buyer and the cost to the seller. We might predict that cherries will be sold by the sealed bag, since if they are sold by the piece, earlier customers will 'cherry-pick' the best ones and because later customers will think the remaining squashed, over-ripe and under-ripe cherries not worth buying and they will be wasted. If quality measurement is left to the buyer, therefore, the value of the shelf of cherries is reduced by the wasted fruit at the end of the day. If the seller takes on the responsibility of measuring quality, he could bag up different grades of cherries and sell at different prices. On the other hand, he can save time and costs by dividing the cherries into sealed bags randomly, thereby limiting the cost of measurement for himself and for the customer. This also has the advantage (for the seller) of hiding unripe or bad fruit amongst the good. We might predict, therefore, that cherries are sold in sealed bags since this allows the seller to 'cheat' by hiding the 'fakes' (bad cherries or 'bad money' in Gresham's terms). Cherries sold loose allow the buyer to 'cheat' by taking the good and leaving the 'fakes' for further circulation. With sealed bagging, the good and bad cherries (money) both remain in circulation. With unbagged sale, the shelf of cherries becomes worse throughout the day as the bad drives out the good. By contrast, melons are sold by the piece, partly because it is harder for the seller to cheat by passing off a bad one for a good one. KW's point was that the question of whether the bad drives out the good depends on whether the seller's costs of measuring quality are lower or higher than the buyer's costs of measuring quality. As the fruit example shows, size matters. Another thing that influences whether seller or buyer end up cheating and whether the bad drives out the good, is the degree of expertise required to measure quality.

What might be said, in these respects about good and bad design? Under what circumstances will bad design (of buildings or urban spaces) drive out good design; or bad designers drive out good designers? For example, might it be true that well designed houses, office buildings and factories tend to be captured and retained, leaving bad designs to circulate in the secondary real estate market? What could be said about selling strategies, in

respect of sellers' and buyers' respective costs of monitoring/measuring quality and cheating strategies? What can be said about 'high design' in architecture, which requires an expert to 'grade' a design as 'high quality', versus 'low design' architecture (the ordinary), which is more easily graded as good or bad, by the user?

I will publish the best answers in the next Dean's roundup. Please invite your graduate students to have a go as well. There might be a good academic paper here if anyone's interested.

Congratulations to colleagues for the achievements listed below.

Chris

Staff Movements

1. Dr. Weifeng Li

- Many congratulations to Weifeng for his promotion to Associate Professor with tenure, with effect from late July 2017.

Teaching and other Achievements

FoA Departments and Divisions

Faculty of Architecture

1. Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award

- Mr. Scott Melbourne of the Division of Landscape Architecture has been won this year's Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award.

Scott is well known for his dedication and enthusiasm in teaching. He has developed a pedagogy of engagement in fostering students' thinking and developing their potential. His excellence in teaching is evident in his consistently high scores in Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning. Scott has made significant contribution in the development of Studio Myanmar, FoA's ten year engagement with urban interventions in that country. The Yangon studio sequence has been well received by students and external reviewers, and has become one of the Faculty's flagship teaching and learning experiences.

2. Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme

- Mr. Zhang Yong, a PhD applicant of DUPAD, has been awarded the Hong Kong PhD Fellowships by the Research Grants Council (RGC). His field of studies are Urban Planning and Urban Governance. He will be supervised by Professor Anthony Yeh and Dr. Liu Xingjian.

Department of Architecture (DARCH)

1. Dr. W S Wong

- Dr. Wong Wah Sang was invited as speaker on Architecture on the Arts Theme Day of Education & Career Expo at the HKCEC on 24 February 2017. The theme is on career opportunities of architecture and related arts.
- Dr. Wong Wah Sang was invited as plenary speaker in the International Conference on Building Materials and Construction held in Hanoi 25 to 27 February 2017. The title of speech is "Factors affecting Building Design and Technology in High Density, Sub-tropical City".

Department of Real Estate and Construction (DREC)

1. Dr. L H Li

- Was interviewed by the Singaporean-based Channel *News Asia* in its documentary programme "Get Real" Episode 7 "The Long Wait" to talk about the housing price, conversion of industrial buildings to residential housings and the transportation cost in Hong Kong:

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/tv/tvshows/get-real-s15/the-long-wait/3519164.html> (from 06:13 to 6:42, from 16:14 to 17:30, from 20:34 to 21:00)

Abstract: *Hong Kong can't build public housing fast enough. Families wait 5 to 8 years to get public housing. Singles, up to 30 years. Failed housing policy is one of Hong Kong's biggest crisis. Why can't the government get it right? What happens to those caught in the long wait?*

2. Professor Richard Sandor, Honorary Professor in REC and keynote speaker of the PLPR Conference 2017

- was interviewed by the South China Morning Post on Hong Kong's potential role in carbon trade:

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2074770/hong-kong-can-take-lead-carbon-trading-us>

3. Ms. YANG Tianwei and Ms. ZHOU Lu (PhD students)

- Have been awarded fellowships by the Ronald Coase Institute to attend the Ronald Coase Workshop on Institutional Analysis in Xiamen, China on 14 - 20, May 2017. Only 26 applicants from all over the world have been selected to attend this workshop. Ms. Yang and Ms. Zhou will present their research ideas and coached by 10 eminent faculties.

Department of Urban Planning and Design (DUPAD)

1. Professor Rebecca Chiu

- Delivered an invited presentation on “Housing Affordability & Sustainability in Hong Kong” at the seminar Planning, Housing and Sustainability: Contemporary Debates in Hong Kong, United Kingdom and Beyond, jointly organized by the Hong Kong Institute of Planners, Royal Town Planning Institute, Planning Department of Government of HKSAR, and Centre of Urban Planning and Design, The University of Hong Kong, City Gallery, 25 February 2017.

The presentation discussed Hong Kong's housing affordability problems, the supply and demand factors, and government's stress on supply solutions but inadequate attention to demand causes and solutions, including the lack of understanding on the impact of global financialization and the financialization of housing on investment demand in Hong Kong 's housing market.



2. Dr. Weifeng Li

- Was invited to serve on the Editorial Advisory Board of *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, published by Elsevier. (<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/transportation-research-part-d-transport-and-environment/editorial-board>)

3. Dr. Xingjian Liu

- Invited to become the Editor of *Asian Geographer*. *Asian Geographer* is published by Taylor & Francis Group on behalf of the Hong Kong Geographical Association.
- Gave a presentation on 'Mind the Gap: Broken Intercity Trunk Roads (BITRs) in China' at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

4. Dr. Jiangping Zhou

- Was elected into the Standing Committee on Congestion Pricing of Transportation Research Board (TRB), US. His term is April 15, 2017 to April 14, 2020.

TRB is one of seven program units of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, which provides independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation and conducts other activities to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions. Members of the National Academies' technical committees serve as individuals, not as representatives of the organizations by which they are employed or of which they may be members. Through their appointment, members agree to actively participate in and support the committee's activities, including those that will require volunteer work. More information about the roles and responsibilities of committee membership is available at <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/dva/memberguide.pdf>

Division of Architectural Conservation Programmes (DACP)

1. Dean Webster

- Was invited by RICS to moderate a concluding panel session and to present a conference summary at the RICS International Heritage Conservation Conference 2017, held at the HKJC Happy Valley Racecourse on 2 March 2017.

Research Achievements

HKUrbanLab research groups

CUSUP

1. Dr. Weifeng Li

- Published an edited book:

Pan, Q. and Li, W. (eds.) (2017). *Smart Growth and Sustainable Development: Selected Papers from the 9th International Association for China Planning Conference, Chongqing, China, June 19 - 21, 2015*. Springer International Publishing.

- Published the following article:

Li, W., Cao, Q., Lang, K., and Wu, J. (2017). Linking Potential Heat Source and Sink to Urban Heat Island: Heterogeneous Effects of Landscape Pattern on Land Surface Temperature. *Science of the Total Environment* (IF=3.976). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.01.191>

Abstract. *Rapid urbanization has significantly contributed to the development of urban heat island (UHI). Regulating landscape composition and configuration would help mitigate the UHI in megacities. Taking Shenzhen, China, as a case study area, we defined heat source and heat sink and identified strong and weak sources as well as strong and weak sinks according to the natural and socioeconomic factors influencing land surface temperature (LST). Thus, the potential thermal contributions of heat source and heat sink patches were differentiated. Then, the heterogeneous effects of landscape pattern on LST were examined by using semiparametric geographically weighted regression (SGWR) models. The results showed that landscape composition has more significant effects on thermal environment than configuration. For a strong source, the percentage of patches has a positive impact on LST. Additionally, when mosaicked with some heat sink, even a small improvement in the degree of dispersion of a strong source helps to alleviate UHI. For a weak source, the percentage and density of patches have positive impacts on LST. For a strong sink, the percentage, density, and degree of aggregation of patches have negative impacts on LST. The effects of edge density and patch shape complexity vary spatially with the fragmentation of a strong sink. Similarly, the impacts of a weak sink are mainly exerted via the characteristics of percent, density, and shape complexity of patches.*

2. Professor Bo-sin Tang

- Delivered a conference presentation, details are as follows:

Tang, B.S. (2017). "Envisioning 2047: Towards a Research Agenda for Urban Planning and Development of Hong Kong", First Annual Forum of the University-Government-Industry Consortium for Sustainable Urban Development – Smart New Town Development and Urban Renewal, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, 4 March 2017.

Abstract: Will the Year 2047 present the largest uncertainty or a golden opportunity for urban development of Hong Kong? In thirty years' time, Hong Kong will arrive at its fifty-year anniversary of its unification with mainland China and the implementation of the 'One Country, Two Systems' under the framework of the Basic Law. To our current community leaders and government decision makers who belong to the generations of the baby boomers and/or Generation X, the Year 2047 is 'unthinkable', not only because most if not all would have retired or passed away at that time, but also because contemporary issues are understandably more pressing and many future circumstances are uncontrollable. However, I argue that these characteristics make it more, rather than less, imperative and exigent for rigorous research that looks into our longer-term strategic planning and urban development and prepares Hong Kong in the run-up to 2047 and beyond. In this presentation, I will first outline some key lessons we may learn from the past development of Hong Kong within a period of three decades (from 1967 to 1997), and discuss the "what if" questions: What Hong Kong have done right and should have done differently to avoid the current problems, and what changes would have been made? By envisioning the future of Hong Kong in 2047, I will then outline some key research questions, in terms of land supply and spatial planning, that we should deliberate with a view to delivering an economically vibrant, socially livable and environmentally sustainable city for the next generations.