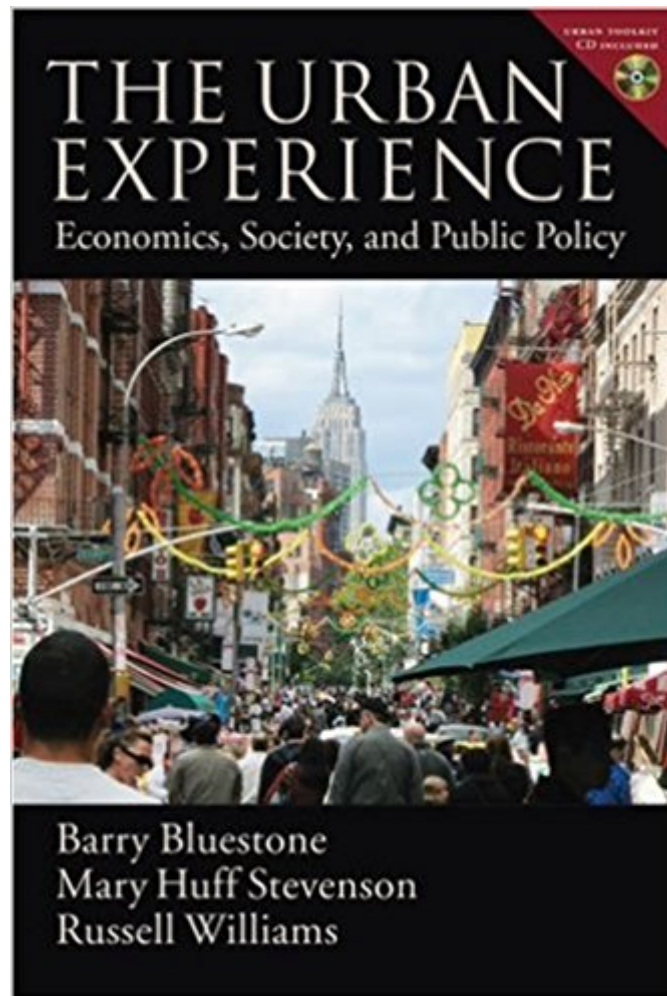




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The Urban Experience: Economics, Society, And Public Policy



Synopsis

The Urban Experience provides a fresh approach to the study of metropolitan areas by combining economic principles, social insight, and political realities with an appreciation of public policy to understand how U.S. cities and suburbs function in the 21st century. The book is grounded in the real life experiences of students and their families on the premise that there is a fascination about one's own surroundings. It uses a great deal of historical and comparative data to explore the wide variation in how we experience urban and suburban communities. It addresses the changing role and function of U.S. metropolitan areas in an age of growing global competition and focuses on key contemporary problems facing cities and suburbs. The book introduces analyses from economics, sociology, and political science as useful tools to understand the evolution and current status of the nation's urban areas. The book will be a valuable text for urban scholars, public officials, and all those interested in understanding urban dynamics. A CD-ROM is packaged with the book containing census information from 1970 through 2005 for virtually every city and town in every metropolitan area in the United States. The data analysis engine on the CD permits the user to create tables and charts comparing municipalities across time with simple clicks of the mouse. Users can compare their own location or any other to others across the country, deepening their understanding of similarities and differences across urban areas.

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Customer Reviews

"This superb new text manages to capture the broad historical foundations of urban economics and

its public policy implications. But it also covers the waterfront of contemporary debates and dilemmas, including those tied to social and environmental values and approaches to local politics, extremely well. The authors' lively and balanced style is ideal for teaching these important ideas, both the classic and the cutting-edge."--Xavier de Souza Briggs, Associate Professor of Sociology and Urban Planning and Director, The Community Problem-Solving Project, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"The Urban Experience provides a concise, clear introduction to a broad range of issues in urban policy. It allows students to understand how economists think about cities without demanding a background in economics and without imposing the neoconservative ideological framework that afflicts many mainstream works. Rather it opens students' minds to the complexities involved when policies are evaluated for their distributional impacts and leads them to a nuanced consideration of urban political economy. It is a terrific piece of work."--Susan S. Fainstein, Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Design, Harvard University

"The Urban Experience is an excellent and long overdue primer on how U.S. cities and their suburbs really work in the 21st century. Bluestone, Stevenson, and Williams do a masterful job of weaving together theory, data, and anecdotes to show how metropolitan areas have changed, how they function today, and how they are likely to address significant challenges in the future."--David Luberoff, Executive Director, Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston, Harvard University; Co-Author, *MegaProjects: The Changing Politics of American Public Investment*

"Place does matter, and Bluestone, Stevenson and Williams convincingly explain why. This path-breaking book comprehensively covers the theory and practice of urban and metropolitan development. The authors probe the latest thinking about cities and urban dynamics, linking together economic, societal, and policy concerns. Critical theoretical concepts and contrasting perspectives are presented clearly and the book is grounded in examples and cases. Written in a lively yet balanced style, this book is enjoyable to read and will appeal to students, professionals and anyone else interested in the economic, social, and public policy challenges and opportunities facing American cities."--Philip Shapira, Professor, School of Public Policy, Georgia Institute of Technology; and Professor of Innovation, Management and Policy, Manchester Business School, University of Manchester

Barry Bluestone grew up in Detroit, Michigan at a time when Detroit was the wealthiest city in the United States--based on the success of the auto industry and the auto workers' union ability to win wage and benefit gains for their members. After completing his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan, he moved to Boston in 1971 when Boston was suffering from high unemployment and an urban fiscal crisis. During the ensuing years, Barry taught at Boston College,

University of Massachusetts Boston, and finally Northeastern University and witnessed Boston experience an urban renaissance based on its ability to capitalize on its high tech industries and financial services. He currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mary Huff Stevenson grew up in a Brooklyn slum and a Queens public housing project and has been fascinated with the dynamics of metropolitan areas ever since. She holds a B.A. degree from Brandeis University and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Michigan. A Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Boston, she lives in Brookline, Massachusetts (it reminds her of Queens, but with cleaner streets). Russell E. Williams was raised in Orangeburg, South Carolina. He was initially introduced to the variety of metro area experiences during childhood visits with relatives in Savannah, Baltimore, and the Baltimore exurbs. Today, the intrigue of urban dynamics is conveyed in his classes at Wheaton College (MA), where he is Assistant Professor of Economics. He holds a B.A. from Amherst College and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

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