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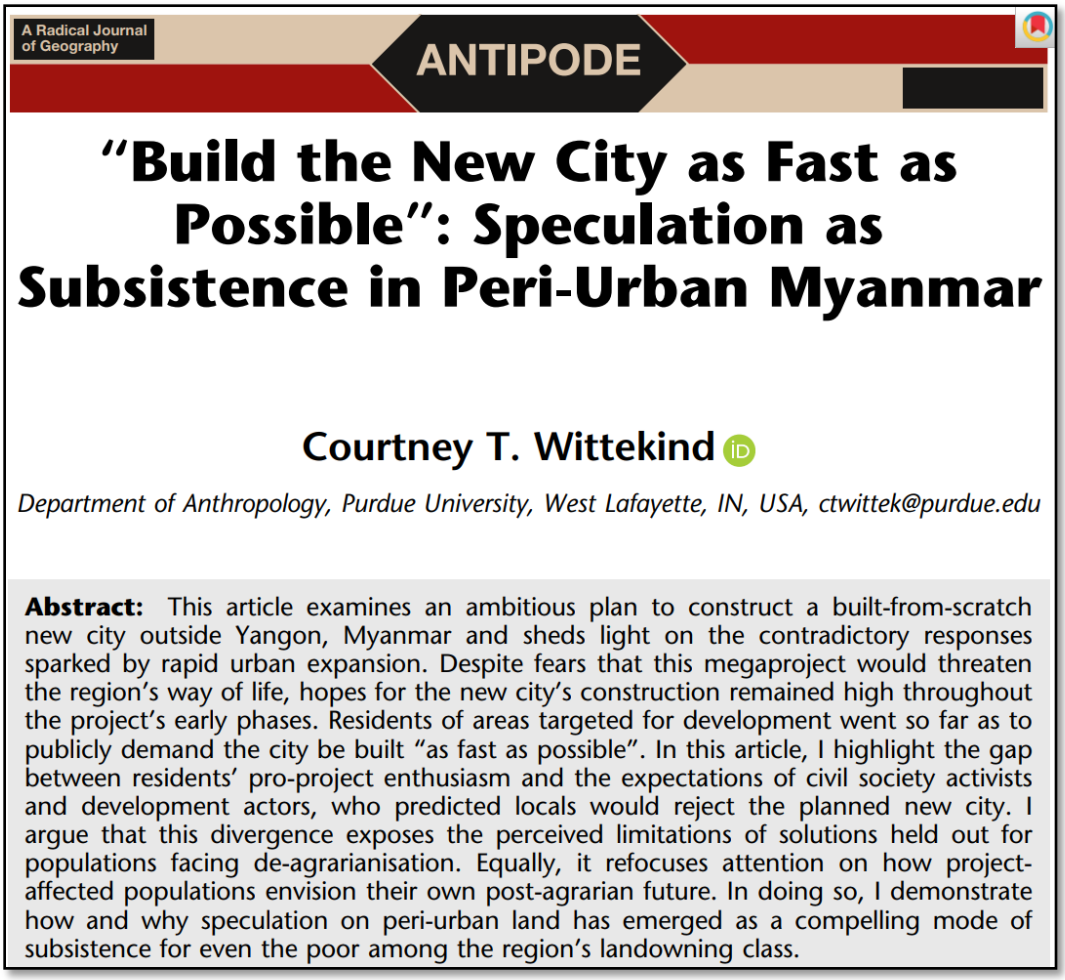
Courtney Wittekind

Anthropology



Dr. Wittekind's website

Wittekind, C. T. (2025). "Build the New City as Fast as Possible": Speculation as Subsistence in Peri-Urban Myanmar. *Antipode*, *57*(6), 2147-2167. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.13118



A Radical Journal of Geography

ANTIPODE

"Build the New City as Fast as Possible": Speculation as Subsistence in Peri-Urban Myanmar

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Abstract: This article examines an ambitious plan to construct a built-from-scratch new city outside Yangon, Myanmar and sheds light on the contradictory responses sparked by rapid urban expansion. Despite fears that this megaproject would threaten the region's way of life, hopes for the new city's construction remained high throughout the project's early phases. Residents of areas targeted for development went so far as to publicly demand the city be built "as fast as possible". In this article, I highlight the gap between residents' pro-project enthusiasm and the expectations of civil society activists and development actors, who predicted locals would reject the planned new city. I argue that this divergence exposes the perceived limitations of solutions held out for populations facing de-agrarianisation. Equally, it refocuses attention on how project-affected populations envision their own post-agrarian future. In doing so, I demonstrate how and why speculation on peri-urban land has emerged as a compelling mode of subsistence for even the poor among the region's landowning class.

Erin Moodie

School of Languages & Cultures



Dr. Moodie's website

Moodie, E. K. (2024). The Humor of Metatheater in Greek and Roman Comedy. *Helios*, *51*(2), 81–112.
https://muse.jhu.edu/journal/363

The Humor of Metatheater in Greek and Roman Comedy

ERIN K. MOODIE

Abstract

Moments of scripted or on-stage laughter in the plays of Aristophanes, Plautus, and Terence help us understand how the humor of overt metatheater worked in ancient comedy and what role metatheatrical humor played in a comic production. Modern humor theory, which has its roots in Greek and Roman philosophical and rhetorical texts, provides a framework for analysis of moments of scripted and on-stage laughter through the lens of incongruity, superiority, and release theories. The overt acknowledgement of the spectators in Greek and Roman comedy is shown to produce humor from delight at the incongruity of the disruption of the stage world or from feelings of superiority to one's fellow spectators, but in longer speeches poets rarely rely on the humor arising from overt metatheater alone.

Keywords: metatheater, humor theory, comedy, Aristophanes, Plautus, Terence, incongruity, superiority, release

Jessica Collier

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Dr. Collier's website

Collier, J. R. (2025). A Community Resilience Approach to Understanding News Deserts and Their Residents. *Digital Journalism*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2025.2574935

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A Community Resilience Approach to Understanding News Deserts and Their Residents

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ABSTRACT

The absence or decline of local journalism has damaging consequences for communities. Just as communities differ in the degree to which they successfully navigate crises, there may be differing degrees of community resilience observable within news deserts. The present study pairs a survey of residents of U.S. news deserts ($n = 1{,}007$) with a content analysis of posts ($n = 3{,}010$) from Facebook pages identified as distributors of local information in news deserts. Findings indicate that community attributes like flexibility and social cohesion are associated with greater perceptions of access to local news, feelings of being informed, local issue knowledge. Evidence also suggests social media meet critical information needs in these areas, rarely promoting false claims. Implications exist for the conceptualization of news deserts, including incorporating community resilience within frameworks for understanding news desert audiences. Approaches for improving information flow and quality within news deserts are discussed.

KEYWORDS

news deserts; community resilience; Facebook; survey; content analysis; social media