



Cities and Urban Cultures (Issues in Cultural and Media Studies (Paperback))

Deborah Stevenson

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*What is distinctive about urban life?

*What key trends have shaped the contemporary city?

*How have the city and urban cultures been explained by sociology and cultural studies?

This is the first book to explore cities and urban life from the perspectives of both sociology and cultural theory. Through an interdisciplinary approach and use of case material, the book demonstrates that the 'real' city of physicality and struggle and the 'imagined' city of representations are entwined in the construction of urban cultures.

Starting with a comparison of the rural and the urban, the book considers ways of imagining the city and of conceptualising urban cultures. It goes on to investigate the implications of several pivotal urban and cultural trends, such as the use of the arts and local cultures in city re-imagining, and the ways in which modernism, postmodernism and globalisation have shaped the built environment and the orientation of academic enquiry. Also examined is the way in which representations of the urban landscape in film, literature, art, and popular texts, have informed dominant ideas about the way certain city spaces - including city centres, urban waterfronts, and so-called 'global cities' - should look, function and 'feel'.

Designed as a text for undergraduate courses in cultural studies, sociology and wider social science, this book traces the development of urban environments from the nineteenth century to the present, and illuminates the nature of urban life.

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