

Urbanized and Latin American Cities: Classroom Activities and Resources Related to Urban Sustainability



Lima, Peru. 2014. Jamie Lee Marks

Resource Packet Overview

The following is a list of resources and classroom activities related to the film *Urbanized* (2011) for use in the K-16 classroom. Regional educators viewed and discussed the film as part of Vanderbilt University's Center for Latin American Studies 2015 Latin America Through Film Summer Institute. This guide explores the Latin American content in the film, and the relevance of the film to social studies and language classrooms with a global component. Suggested classroom activities range from grades 4-12, and even include some suggested college classroom activities as well. Check out the film from CLAS today! It's also available for viewing on many popular streaming platforms.

Related resources: Powerpoint below

Why *Urbanized*?

Urbanized in the Classroom

1. Clips in the film are short, discrete, and accessible, which is ideal for classroom use.
2. The film discusses participatory urban design, which directly relates to participatory classrooms and student-centered pedagogy.
3. The study of cities is inherently interdisciplinary (brings together STEM fields, social studies, language, art, etc.).
4. The film touches on concepts that relate to multiple content areas: community, democracy, sustainability, our experience of place/space, and the importance of design and art to everyday life.

Urbanized and Teaching Latin America

1. Useful for engaging student interest in vocabulary units in Spanish related to transit/cities, housing, development, or sustainability.
2. Deals with crucial social, economic, and political issues in Latin American Cities.
3. Helpful for connecting issues faced in Latin American cities to student experiences in their own cities. Fosters global connections and consciousness.
4. Provides a different view of Latin America through:
 - a. Focusing on cities
 - b. Discussing cutting edge ways Latin America is addressing urban development challenges, (disrupting developed/developing binary models)
 - c. Showing how cities in the Americas (and the world) are connected
5. The film discusses participatory urban design, which directly relates to participatory classrooms and student-centered pedagogy.
6. The study of cities is inherently interdisciplinary (brings together STEM fields, social studies, language, art, etc.).
7. The film touches on concepts that relate to multiple content areas: community, democracy, sustainability, our experience of place/space, and the importance of design and art to everyday life.
- 8.

Latin American Cities Featured in *Urbanized*



Bogotá, Colombia

Santiago, Chile

Brasília, Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Curitiba, Brazil

Bogotá, Colombia

Themes addressed: public transportation, limiting car use, Bus Rapid Transit (as of 2015 Latin America is the region with the most access to Bus Rapid Transit systems)

Santiago, Chile

Themes addressed: low-income housing, participatory design/design from below, in-migration, informal housing

Brasília, Brazil

Themes addressed: architecture as art, modernism, architecture's limits, livability vs. design

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Themes addressed: surveillance and security, infrastructural monitoring, technology

Urbanized Resources Online

Global Agreements (United Nations)

Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, Earth Summit 2002

Builds on Stockholm 1972 summit and Rio de Janeiro 1992 summit.

<http://www.un-documents.net/jburgdec.htm>

United Nations Declaration that states “We reaffirm our pledge to place particular focus on, and give priority attention to, the fight against the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people, which include: chronic hunger; malnutrition; foreign occupation; armed conflict; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; natural disasters; illicit arms trafficking; trafficking in persons; terrorism; intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.”

United Nations Earth Summit 2012. Rio + 20 Agreement (The Future We Want)

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/content/documents/727The%20Future%20We%20Want%2019%20J%20une%201230pm.pdf>

(highlights sustainable cities and human settlements (pp. 23-24) sustainable transport systems (p.23), urban sustainability, and sustainability as economic, environmental, and social all at once)

Public Transportation and Public Mobility

Institution for Transportation and Development Policy (www.itdp.org)

The 8 Principles for Better Streets and Better Cities (<https://www.itdp.org/what-we-do/eight-principles/>)

1. WALK | Develop neighborhoods that promote walking
2. CYCLE | Prioritize non-motorized transport networks
3. CONNECT | Create dense networks of streets and paths
4. TRANSIT | Locate development near high-quality public transport
5. MIX | Plan for mixed use
6. DENSIFY | Optimize density and transit capacity
7. COMPACT | Create regions with short commutes
8. SHIFT | Increase mobility by regulating parking and road use

<https://www.itdp.org/what-we-do/eight-principles/>

What is BRT?

<https://www.itdp.org/library/standards-and-guides/the-bus-rapid-transit-standard/what-is-brt/>

The BRT Scorecard—how can I tell if a system is BRT?

<https://www.itdp.org/library/standards-and-guides/the-bus-rapid-transit-standard/the-scorecard/>

Educational Activities

Language and Social Studies Activities

Free listing is a classic field method in anthropology, sociology, geography, etc. It is commonly implemented as part of original research in order to understand what individuals living in a culture think or believe about a certain thing. This is especially useful in social science classrooms. However, it can be used in foreign language classroom to engage vocabulary knowledge, in literature classes to explore with student-readers believe or think about a character, plot point, or setting.

Free listing is simple, but powerful. You simply ask informants to anonymously list “all the X you know about” or “what kinds of X are there?” where X might be brands, ideas, kinds of vehicles, words related to gender, etc. In a classroom, you might limit the number of words to 10, or the time students have to write words or phrases. Then, you collect the lists and analyze how frequently words are mentioned. In the Appendix here, I’ve provided a sample free list data collection sheet and data analysis sheet for classroom use. We will be practicing together at the institute.

Memory Mapping or Mental Mapping is just what it sounds like— mapping from memory! Memory mapping as a classroom activity (or research method) can focus on several different types of mapping including:

- The mapping of an enclosed space (room/classroom, floor plan of a house)
 - o Mapping your classroom from memory along with your students is a great way to learn about differential understandings of that space)
- A commonly used route (through a school, neighborhood, city)
- The mapping of a neighborhood, campus, etc.
- The mapping of a part of the city, or whole city
- The mapping of the city in context (what’s around your city—are there mountains, wilderness areas?)
- The mapping of a state by population area (from memory, where do most of the people in the state live? Where are the largest cities?)

Mental mapping is another great way to start conversations about how we use space, what we think about our cities, cultural ideas about where we live, and design from the bottom up.

Routes and mental maps. A fun variation of this activity involves drawing a map, and then using tracing paper to draw a route or several routes on top of it.

Emotional maps/familiarity maps. Alternatively, to focus on how we feel in/imagine our cities, you can use tracing paper over a map to color in areas of the city you know or enjoy, and other colors to point out areas of your city you still don't know much about or don't like (emotional map/familiarity map). This research technique has been used in Latin American cities to demonstrate the large degree of segregation between social classes in residential areas.

Infrastructure, mixed-use space, and mental maps. Another variation is to think about what all you can accomplish within 3 miles of where you live. Can you get basic services, groceries, etc. where you live? If not, could you easily take public transit to fulfill those needs? Why or why not? What needs can you meet close to home and which can't you? What effect does that have on your daily life?

Other prompts and activities for adaptation

Fine Arts

Photography

Ask students to photograph things in their own city that relate to the place/city described either in a piece of literature, a non-fiction textbook, or a documentary. Compare what you find! For example, in *Urbanized* we see images of BRT transit—how is Nashville's BRT similar? Different?

Language Arts/Literature Student Prompts (for adaptation)

Describe a place (real or fictional/in a piece of literature) by making a list of a person's or people's (real or characters) descriptions of that place, how they feel about that place, or their experiences in that place. Use 3-4 quotes from the text or interviews to support your description.

The city: a mixtape

This challenge provides you the opportunity for you to curate your own music compilation. The content of this compilation is your choice, but each song on your list should be relevant to the study of urban life, or cities, or a particular city. In your liner note (the written component) you will state what theme or genre you engage and why. It consists of your commentary and analysis of a few of the musical materials that you have selected and why you've selected them. Perhaps the playlist relates to a period or event, an existing emotional narrative, genre, canon, place, time, etc. Whatever you would like! Be thoughtful, reflect. Your playlist can be made

using Spotify, a YouTube playlist, a DropBox folder, another medium or burnt to disc if you would like. Just make sure you can make it available to your instructor.

Sustainability and personae

Choose a character in a film, novel, television show, comic book, etc., that you feel is described in terms of her/his relationship to one aspect of sustainability activism (Green movements, local food movements, environmental activism, preservation/conservation, etc.). How does sustainability factor into his/her/its characterization? To his/her/its gender identity? Race? Are issues like food sources, conservation, or activism part of character development? What about eating meat, or not? What about social class and personal choices? Is this depiction used to undermine a character? Or build her/him up as a hero? [Write a short analysis of how sustainability related issues/ associations are used to sell or represent the character of your choice.]

Social Studies

Writing Prompts

Describe a place at different times of day, different times of year, or in a different historical rea.

Describe a room, starting with how it's organized. What is the space itself like? Move to objects. What objects reveal something about the lives of people who occupy it?

Describe the bodily sensations and emotional sensations of moving through a place. What can you feel/hear/smell/see? What does that tell you?

Shared Itineraries (college level exercise/for adult students)

Public transportation is central to urban planning and discussions about sustainable cohabitation. Access to public transportation in your city affects not only students, who count on free access to campus buses, but to residents of our city more broadly. Locate yourself as a Name of School student in a community that exists outside of the university. Select a Bus Line Name route that runs at least partially off campus (more than a mile). Get online and determine where the route begins and ends. Hop on the bus at a stop of your and take it to the end of its route and back. Plan for adequate time, as bus routes can often take one or more hours to complete. Take notes about who gets on and off and any interactions that that transpire. Take notes about parts of the city you encounter. Have you been there before? What did you feel/experience? Compose a brief report of what you saw, heard, felt, thought, imagined, and/or daydreamed about when you were there.



Urbanized +
Latin American Cities



In my city, I want _____.

To be used with the film *Urbanized* and the CLAS packet “*Urbanized* and Latin American Cities: Classroom Activities and Resources Related to Urban Sustainability”

about the film

Director: Gary Hustwit

part of a trilogy of films about design

- *Helvetica* (2007)
- *Objectified* (2009)
- *Urbanized* (2011)

Funded in part by Kickstarter campaigns

Urbanized in the classroom

Clips/units are short (3-8 minutes)

Participatory design as a concept directly relates to democratic/participatory classrooms and pedagogy

Looks at well-being and livability in more than economic terms

Also directs attention to individual and social experiences of urban life/cities.

Urbanized in the classroom

The study of cities is inherently interdisciplinary.

The film touches on concepts that relate to multiple content areas

- community
- democracy
- sustainability
- how we imagine the places we inhabit
- the importance of design and art to everyday life

Urbanized and Latin America

Useful for **engaging** students in vocabulary units in Spanish related to transit/cities, housing, development, or sustainability

Deals with crucial social, economic, and political issues in Latin American cities

Helpful for connecting those issues to student experiences in US cities

Urbanized and Latin America

Provides a different view of Latin America through:

focusing on cities

discussing development challenges *and* successes

showing how cities in the Americas (and the world) are connected and share common directives (disrupting the developed/developing binary)

1. Historical and Cultural Context: Development with a capital D

1944

Bretton Woods/United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference

by 1950s had established a rhetoric of developed/undeveloped nations

1960s

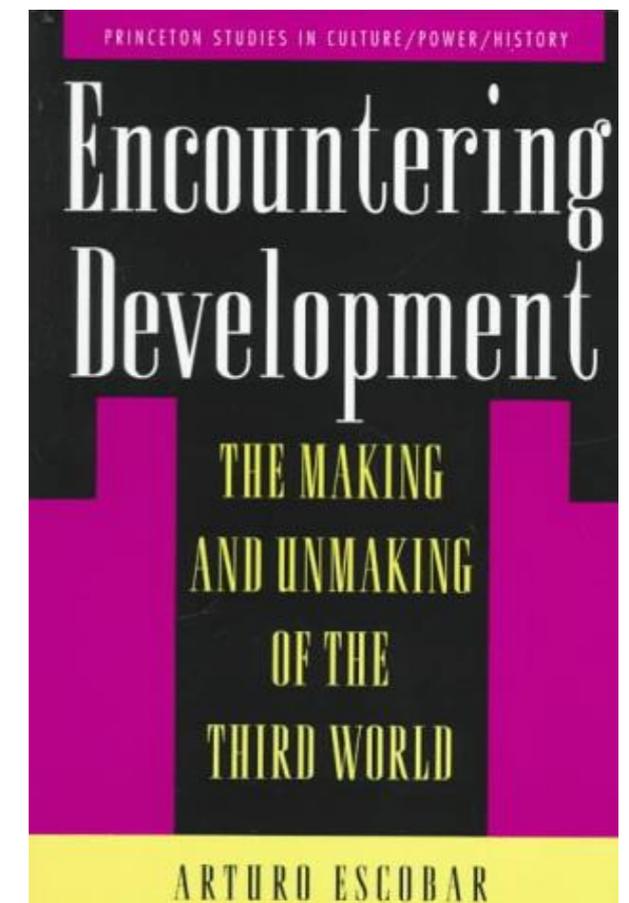
Modernization Theory (linear, traditions as obstacles)

1970s

Critiques of modernization theory/mainstream development theories begin, oil prices rise rapidly, the Latin American debt/economic crisis begins

1980s

Latin American Debt Crisis/Lost Decade
Structural Adjustment Programmes



1. Historical and Cultural Context: Development with a capital D

Structural Adjustment Programmes in the Latin American Context

Goal: reduce country's fiscal imbalance, open up markets, increase development as measured by Gross Domestic Product

- Increasing price of public services, cutting financing for selected social programs
- Reducing or cutting agricultural subsidies (decreases viability of agricultural work, **promotes rural to urban migration**)
- privatization of some or all of state-owned enterprise (**urban infrastructure**)
- eliminating/decreasing trade barriers (even free trade zones)
- inflation

1. Historical and Cultural Context: Development with a capital D

Some began to critique this, saying:

1. SAPs and other economic development schema benefitted classes unevenly, has benefitted those who have on the backs of those who haven't.

2. GDP not a great indicator of wellness or development across social sectors so researchers started to disaggregate the data. the HDI, Human Development Index (1990).

Researchers, individuals working with development banks/institutions, and planners rework top-down development and design. Began to talk about development projects as not producing sustainable, equitable results, and how to address this issue.

2. Sustainability on the Global Stage

1987 Brundtland Report

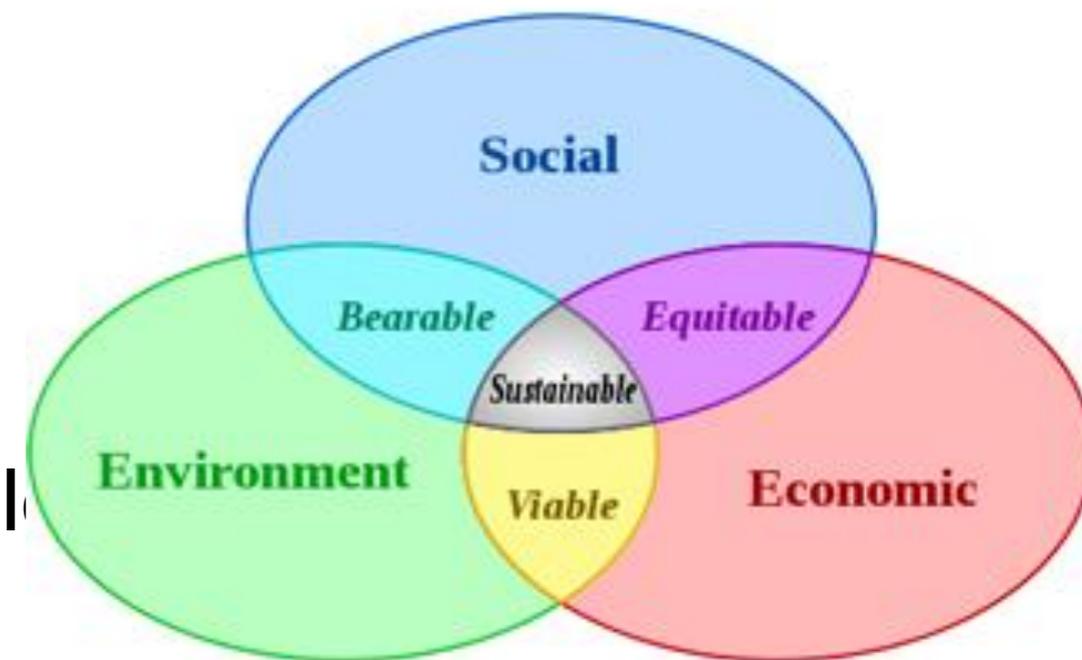
“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future.”

1992 Rio Earth Summit

Three pillar model

2002 Rio Earth Summit

Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development (explicitly includes cities!)



Rio+20

[http://daccess-dds-](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/476/10/PDF/N1147610.pdf?OpenElement)

[ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/476/10/PDF/N1147610.pdf?OpenElement](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/476/10/PDF/N1147610.pdf?OpenElement) (26)

more info on printed resource

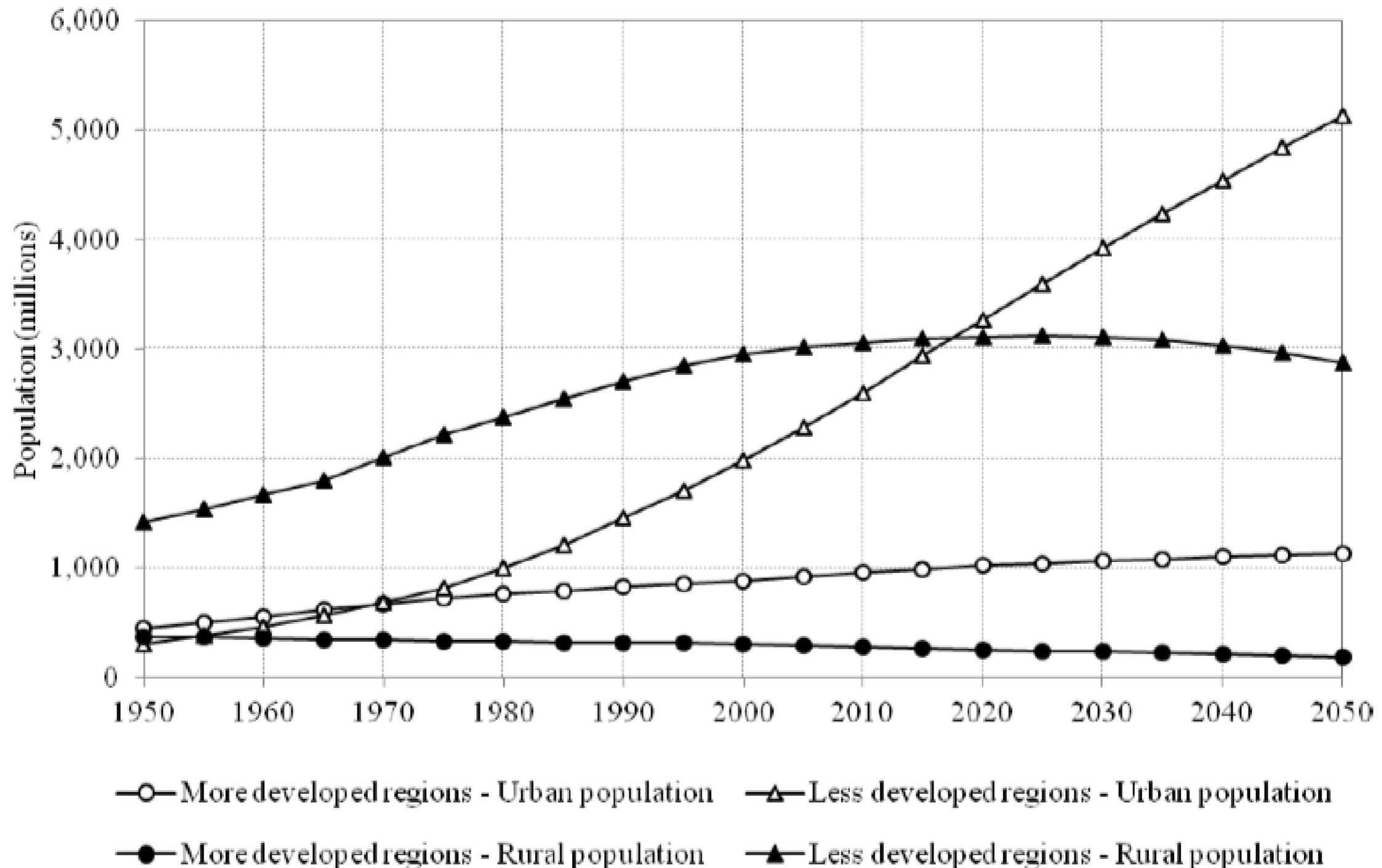
3. The Urban Millennium

According to the UN State of the World Population 2007 report, sometime in the middle of 2007, the majority of people worldwide were then living in towns or cities, for the first time in history; this is referred to as the arrival of the "Urban Millennium" or the 'tipping point.'

3. The Urban Millennium

United Nations 2011 World Urbanization Prospects

Figure I. Urban and rural populations by development group, 1950-2050



3. The Urban Millennium

United Nations 2011 World Urbanization Prospects

1. Major disparities in the level of urbanization exist among development groups. Thus, whereas the proportion urban in the more developed regions was already nearly 54 per cent in 1950, it will still take another decade for half of the population of the less developed regions to live in urban areas (figure I).
2. The world urban population is expected to increase by 72 per cent by 2050, from 3.6 billion in 2011 to 6.3 billion in 2050. **By mid-century the world urban population will likely be the same size as the world's total population was in 2002.**
3. Globally, the level of urbanization is expected to rise from 52 per cent in 2011 to 67% in 2050)

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/world-urbanization-prospects-the-2011-revision.html>

3. The Urban Millennium

United Nations 2011 World Urbanization Prospects

4. By 1970, the world had only two megacities: Tokyo and New York. Since then their number has increased markedly and most new megacities have arisen in developing countries (table 3). Today, Asia has 13 megacities, Latin America has four, and Africa, Europe and Northern America have two each (table 3). Thirteen of those megacities are capitals of their countries.

By 2025, when the number of megacities is expected to reach **37**, Asia would have gained another nine, Latin America two, and Africa, Europe and Northern America one each. This indicates a clear trend of accelerated urban concentration in Asia.

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/world-urbanization-prospects-the-2011-revision.html>

Challenges to Sustainable Urban Development in Latin America

1. Inequalities have deepened between rich and poor, exaggerating splits between formal/informal sectors (of housing, work, etc.)
2. Informal settlements (large number of rural to urban migrants in Latin America end up living in informal settlements at some point).
3. Low-cost labor of residents in the low-income settlements sustain lifestyles in privileged parts of the cities (manufacturing, labor, services, house hold work, etc.). Transportation is key (issue: time poverty).
4. Individuals living in poorer areas are stigmatized; housing prices make it difficult to live anywhere else
 - a. Hazards associated with living in informal neighborhoods: environmental health, toxic wastes, limited resources, higher crime rates
 - b. however, impoverished neighborhoods often use less and create less waste: those who create the least waste suffer from the pollution generated by the wealthiest

Latin American Cities in *Urbanized*

- Santiago, Chile
- Brasilia, Brazil
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Bogotá, Colombia
(Curitiba, Brazil also mentioned in this segment)



Lo Barnechea, Santiago, Chile

- Planning for in-migration
- shanty towns, “human settlements,” informal housing, informal developments, favelas, young towns, slums, etc. (depends on where you are)
- incorporation or eviction



Lo Barnechea, Santiago, Chile

- The clip addresses location as as important as space/internal aspects of a home
- participatory design
- design from above/design from below



Other initiatives to address this in Latin America

- Urban Poor Federations
- Participatory Budgeting
- Land sharing



Brasília, Brazil

Concepts: Architecture as art, architecture's limits

- Built on empty plateau, a city before people.
- Demonstrated that the everything-in-its-place approach does not lead to urban wellness
- Housing and economics (built for 500k, holds 2.5 million)



Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Surveillance

Integrating departments

Security



Bogotá, Columbia

- What's BRT?
 - “Subway by bus”
 - High-capacity, low-emissions buses
 - Buses with separate lanes, median aligned
 - Pre-board fare collection
 - Branded (Transmilenio, Metropolitano, etc.). Not drivers but pilots (stigma)
- Note: limiting parking



Global Data

32,223,252 passengers a day,
193 cities, 5k kilometers length

Which regions are doing the best? rank them from 1-5.

Africa

Asia

Europe

Northern America

Oceania

brtdata.org



BRT Challenges

Challenges

- Latin America
 - investment
 - existing transit sectors
 - accessibility (maintaining it!)
- U.S.
 - many private car users (vs. 80% public transportation rates)
 - giving up a lane
 - accessibility (increasing it?)
 - What do you think?



