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Placing splintering urbanism: Introduction

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Abstract

This paper introduces a collection of case studies aimed at ‘Placing Splintering Urbanism’, in reference to the thesis developed by Graham and Marvin [Graham, S., Marvin, S., 2001. *Splintering Urbanism. Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban condition*. Routledge, London]. Whilst acknowledging the value of the thesis as an analytical framework in opening the way to innovative understandings of contemporary urban dynamics, the paper argues that, taken together, the articles in this themed issue seriously challenge the ‘splintering urbanism’ thesis theoretically, empirically and methodologically. They question in particular the postulated universality of the ‘modern infrastructural ideal’ and of ‘unbundling’ and ‘bypass’ processes – all of which are key elements in Graham and Marvin’s argument – as well as the assertion that reforms in infrastructure sectors should generally result in more discriminatory, socially regressive patterns of provision of essential services and more splintered urban spaces. Based on these fundamental critiques, the paper concludes that one cannot speak of ‘splintering urbanism in general’ i.e., as a global trend – in any meaningful analytical way.



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Keywords

Infrastructures; Neoliberalism; Splintering Urbanism; Europe; United States; Lower-income countries

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