

The Tyranny of Rent

Neil Gray

A recent Shelter advert¹ lucidly exposed the obscene rise in house prices by comparing how much domestic household commodity goods would now cost if matched to house price rises. A joint of meat would cost £95.62; a chicken, £47.51; a box of washing powder, £28.53; a jar of coffee, £20.22; a dozen eggs, £9.30, and a bunch of bananas, £7.86. As Shelter argue: we wouldn't accept these price rises with anything else, so why accept them in housing? Eliot M. Tretter's article 'The Cultures of Capitalism: Glasgow and the Monopoly of Culture' (Antipode: 2009) goes some way to answering how we got to this abject position. Tretter's work can be seen as a continuation of the critical vein of *historical geographical materialism*, which has developed since the 1970s. Deeply influenced by the research of urban theorist David Harvey (in turn influenced by the critical writings of Marx, Benjamin, and Lefebvre), this school of critical geography has produced a corpus of materially grounded analyses of the ways in which capital, culture and social relations are both constituted in, and constitute the urban realm. Tretter's article takes as its starting point Harvey's analysis of *monopoly* – relating to rents, competition and fixed capital – in order to draw out the links between culture, gentrification, and economic valorisation in 1980s Glasgow. While Glasgow is routinely held up as a salutary success story in the boosterist literature of 'post-industrial', culture-led urban renewal², Tretter argues that this narrative masks an insidious and destructive raid on the commons: "Glasgow is a primary example of an industrial city that has re-invented itself through the exploitation of its cultural infrastructure" (p.113).

Following Harvey, Tretter contends that a precondition for looting the cultural infrastructure of a city is the transformation of elements of cultural distinctiveness into 'fixed capital' (physical infrastructure such as land, machinery, transport etc, which is not immediately spent in the process of producing products or commodities) via outright, or *de facto*, forms of privatisation. Following a time-line that begins in the early '80s and concludes around the period of the European City of Culture Festival in 1990 – an event intensely contested by the oppositional *Workers City* group – Tretter's analysis provides a useful heuristic with which to understand contemporary raids on the commons in Glasgow. While acknowledging the value in Tretter's account, the full magnitude of this ongoing dispossession remains untouched by his curious decision to end his enquiry at a historical juncture lying nearly 20 years in the past. Moreover, his narrow emphasis on the monopoly aspects of *culture* and representational issues omits other forms of monopoly and underplays the still central question of *labour* in the valorisation of capital³. However, his re-appraisal of the *Workers City* group, and his appeal for their enduring relevance, provides a platform from which to analyse a continuum of dispossession that has never stopped and to bring important lessons from the contested past into a productive and critical relationship with this present era of recession and financial crisis.

Extracting Value From The City: Basic Banalities

"There is a politics of space, because space is political."

Henri Lefebvre⁴

"With the disappearance of local manufacturing industries and periodic crises in government and finance, culture is more and more the business of cities – the basis of their tourist attractions and their unique, competitive edge".

Sharon Zukin⁵, 1995

Despite all the evidence to the contrary⁶, culture is *still* presumed to play a positive economic role in the fortune of cities globally. A common

assumption is that each city contains a stock of physical, social and cultural assets that are economically exploitable. The widespread erosion of the economic and fiscal base of many large cities in the advanced capitalist world since the 1970s has seen a re-orientation of governance from a managerial to an *entrepreneurial mode*⁷ with an emphasis on exploiting a city's cultural infrastructure concomitant with the turn from manufacturing, and waning central budgets. As Tretter argues, the revaluation of culture is directly contemporaneous with the broader entrepreneurial turn in governance: the appraisal of culture as an economic asset, and the increasing exchange value of culture, has led governments and private capital to undertake a series of programmes and strategies to realise and validate these resources. While many city governments of a Keynesian persuasion were once engaged in managing the urban economy with at least a nominal agenda of alleviating inequality through planning and administration of services, urban governments now attempt to follow an explicit growth agenda in partnership with private agencies and non-governmental organisations. Such market-oriented, *market-dependent*, 'growth coalitions' reflect elite interests and typically "show a significant deficit with respect to accountability, representation, and the presence of formal rules of inclusion or participation"⁸.

A major characteristic of this 'entrepreneurial turn' is geographically uneven development and inter-city competition. Local growth coalitions routinely stress a fierce struggle with other cities to compete for investment capital. Thus increasingly opaque constellations of power have justified strategies to stimulate economic growth – by providing subsidies, tax breaks, and other economic incentives – as a means to lure and leverage capital. In the race to enhance the competitive position of the city in relation to other competing cities, the use of localizing strategies (the exploitation of a city's peculiar 'marks of distinction') is now ubiquitous. Cities have sought, with highly uneven results, to increase their marketability and brand identity through the promotion of the city and its assets as commodities to investors and private capital (including its labour force, infrastructure and cultural amenities). As part of this generalised process, Tretter emphasises the exploitation of the shared cultural assets of a city ('the commons') as a means to promote the revaluation of prime urban land, and transform culture into an economic resource. In order to unpack this proposition in historically and geographically concrete terms, he assesses the "primary example" of Glasgow through the prism of Harvey's theoretical insights on the political economy of monopoly rent.

Monopoly Rent

"...capitalism cannot do without monopolies and craves the means to assemble them. So the question upon the agenda is how to assemble monopoly powers in a situation where the protections afforded by so-called 'natural monopolies' of space and location, and the political protections of national boundaries and tariffs, have been seriously diminished if not eliminated".

David Harvey¹⁰

Harvey begins to answer this question by noting that all forms of landownership that are the basis for the wealth and power of landowners exist as monopolies: they involve exclusive claims to definite portions of the surface of the earth that are not reproducible. However, transformations in time-space compression ("the annihilation of space through time"¹¹) have accelerated since the shift from 'fordist' to 'post-fordist'¹² modes of accumulation via advanced telecommunications and transportation innovations. These innovations have destroyed previously existing spatial

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barriers and loosened the individual landowners' monopoly power by putting them in competition with increasingly mobile global competitors. For Harvey, the drive to obtain profit from the cultural capital of cities can be seen as an attempt by landowners and their political allies to re-assert and reclaim monopoly powers in a context of accelerated globalisation.

While the source of land rent is derived from a monopoly on land, *monopoly rent* is distinguished by the ability of a landowner to earn a higher than average rent because of another pre-existing monopoly that exists independently of their monopoly on the land. Harvey specifies *location* and *scarcity* as the two chief sources of monopoly rent.

- **Location:** The locational source is related to the centrality of the land to a highly concentrated activity of economic capture such as a transport or communication network, or a financial center or shopping precinct. This is an indirect form of monopoly rent. A premium for the land will be paid in this case for its accessibility and for the commodities and services produced therefrom.

- **Scarcity:** In the case of scarcity the inimitable qualities of a resource are directly traded upon (for instance a vineyard, prime real-estate location or work of art). Here the uniqueness and specificity of the asset forms the basis for monopoly prices. Investing in a city's cultural infrastructure is so desirable, Harvey argues, because culture distinctiveness is always embedded in a place and therefore provides the potential for landowners to garner extra rental income on top of an average differential rent. A distinct cultural infrastructure is thus the source of additional monopoly rents if imaginatively marketed in the commodity realm.

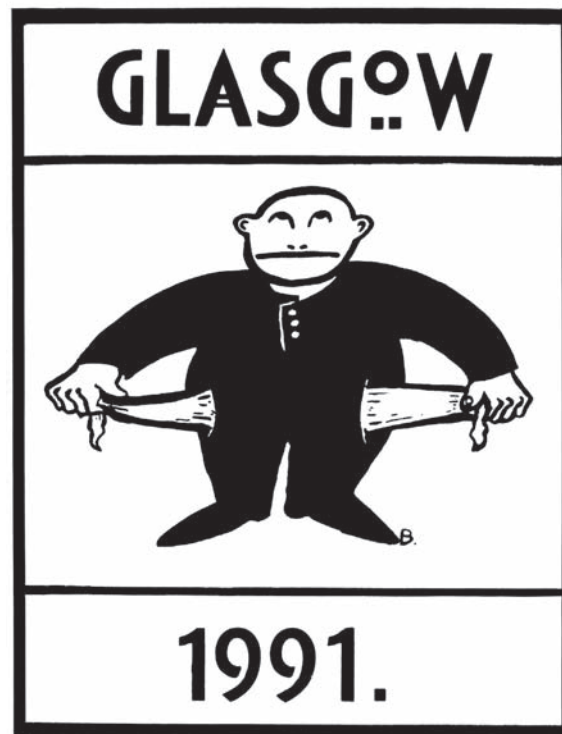
Moreover, in Harvey's schema, *free* amenities held in common come to be valued for their ability to fetch monopoly rents. While many of the assets that he discusses fetch a monopoly price; many, such as parks, museums, monuments and scenic areas do not. Yet these ostensibly 'free' resources still provide a potential source of monopoly rent for adjacent land and property owners

due to co-determinant factors such as prestige and status linked to special, localised 'marks of distinction' (e.g. a block of apartments overlooking a municipal park, or a shopping centre close to a museum, monument or gallery).

As Tretter notes, the cultural resources and institutions of a city almost always function at the local level as monopolies (each city can host only so many concert halls, museums, theatres, etc), and the monopolistic potential of a city's cultural assets are routinely traded upon to boost a city's competitive edge: "Cities trade on their cultural resources in attempts to attract investment, and corporations profit by effectively siphoning off revenue from the exploitation of the popularity of the city's infrastructure or the uniqueness of a particular cultural tradition" (p.116). But it is not just cultural institutions that have monopolistic potential; the culture of any city is perceived as a monopoly asset because it is not easily exchangeable with the culture of another city. In this vastly reductive sense, any city can be said to have a monopoly over its "cultural heritage" or "way of life" because they are specific to one location (p.116). City culture itself, as abstract and unstable as this concept may be¹³, is open to monopolization because of its unique and non-exchangeable properties; city branding, endemic to the neoliberal city (e.g. 'Glasgow: Scotland With Style'), is perhaps the most blatant example of the city reduced to the status of a product under the market calculus.

Smiles Better?

Glasgow, as Tretter notes, is a "primary example" of monopolistic subsumption. In the early 1980s, Glasgow's elite started to rid the city of images of its industrial past, and began in earnest the plunder of its cultural infrastructure in the pursuit of urban revalorisation. The 'S/Miles Better' campaign launched in 1983¹⁴ and the Garden Festival of 1988 were initial attempts in this direction, followed by Glasgow's nomination to host the European City of Culture festival in 1990. A key advocate for Glasgow's nomination bid was 'Glasgow Action' – the "first clearly defined public-private partnership in Scotland"¹⁵. Formed in 1985 by the Scottish Development Agency (SDA), Glasgow Action formed a strategic partnership with Glasgow District Council (GDC) to ensure that public funds were mobilised on behalf of private partners. Typical of later entrepreneurial private/public growth coalitions, Glasgow Action was almost exclusively composed of local business personalities¹⁶ with direct ties to local banks and other property related institutions¹⁷. Their agenda unsurprisingly reflected the bias of that constituency. The purpose of Glasgow Action was "to be a vehicle to inject private sector leadership into the growth process" (p.120), stated Chief Executive, David Macdonald. The agency was



designed to "recreate Glasgow's entrepreneurial spirit" and to co-ordinate and link Glasgow's urban renewal efforts with a series of private partners. Private sponsorship was supposed to support community development, but as Robin Boyle noted at the time, this soon turned into a narrow focus on property development: "Profit becomes the goal; the original, much wider, objectives covering the economic and social condition of the city begin to fade"¹⁸.

In the lead up to the City of Culture festival Glasgow saw a major subsidy-driven property bubble: conservation and refurbishment work in the newly-branded 'Merchant City' accompanied new office buildings and refurbishments in other city centre locations such as the Broomielaw (now home to the International Financial Services District, IFSD), the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, and the site of the 1988 National Garden Festival, "all developments heavily underwritten by the SDA and other government agencies"¹⁹. The flipside of the 'boom' in construction and renovation came in the form of a sharp increase in rents, with city centre rents nearly doubling between 1987 and 1989 alone (p.120). This highly uneven and ambivalent 'success story' was attributed to the entrepreneurial vision of the Glasgow City councillors and business leaders whose place-marketing techniques (rather than public subsidy) were said to have provided the necessary stimulus for economic growth. In particular, according to Tretter, the marketing of Glasgow's Victorian architectural grid, helped landowners and property developers trade on Glasgow's unique and distinctive cultural qualities and its "new image as a cultural centre" (cited, p.121). Private investment, Tretter argues, was thus primarily stimulated on the back of the pre-existing monopoly arising from the special qualities and 'marks of distinction' associated with locational factors (place) – a monopoly held over and above individual monopolies in property and infrastructure.

Tretter maintains that the drive towards monopoly rents in Glasgow was built on the valorization of Glasgow's unique and distinctive cultural assets as "a tool to promote economic growth" (p.122). He cites a key report by the Museum and Galleries Commission in 1986, which assessed Glasgow's cultural infrastructure as one of the largest in the UK (p.122). When Scottish local government reorganisation in 1973 made art infrastructure the exclusive domain of district councils – including all capital and revenue expenditures related to the "fine and performing arts" – the GDC were legally sanctioned to exploit Glasgow's cultural infrastructure for economic growth (p.122). In the run up to the City of Culture year, GDC routinely emphasised the comparative advantage these assets afforded the city in terms of promoting such a goal.

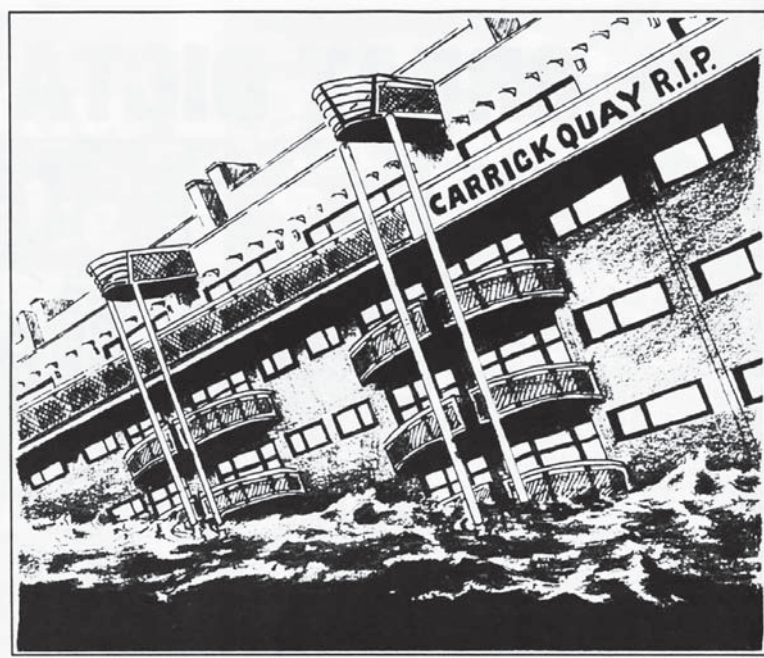
In order to 'release the value' of the local authority's heritable arts and cultural assets, and transform the cultural commons into fixed capital, the GDC introduced privatisation measures in at

least two ways in the lead up to and during the City of Culture festival. First, the GDC (hiring Thatcher's favourite PR company, Saatchi and Saatchi) began to "package and sell the culture of the city as a brand and source of revenue to private investors" (p.123). The City Council gave its private sponsors exclusive usufruct on the European City of Culture brand, featuring them in all brochures and advertising materials. This acceptance of private sponsorship of the arts marked a decisive shift in Council policy to what is now a banality despite its relatively recent and highly contested provenance in the UK. Second, Glasgow's long tradition of not charging people for admission to museums and galleries ended when two museums specifically designed for the City of Culture festival introduced admission fees. The Mclellan Art Galleries (now closed as galleries), entirely funded from the public funds, started charging a fee at the door in 1990. More pertinently for Tretter's discussion, 'Glasgow's Glasgow', presented by the City Council as the 'leading exhibition' of the Year of Culture festival charged a standard admission fee of £3.40. But this was later reduced to £1 when projected attendances fell to less than half the numbers expected. 'Glasgow's Glasgow' ended as a "critical and financial disaster"²⁰, with the City Council eventually losing £4.5 million on the hugely unpopular exhibition (p.124).

The 'Glasgow's Glasgow' exhibition was roundly slated by curators and activists for its efforts to transfer art already on display for free in Glasgow museums to a private 'for-profit' corporation. Elspeth King, then the curator of the People's Palace museum, was an especially vocal critic. For King, the privileging of the exhibition ignored the already established worth of the People's Palace and its resonant location on Glasgow Green (an area historically associated with working-class gatherings). She also criticized the exhibition for receiving – unlike the People's Palace – a seemingly endless supply of public funding; failing to represent the full diversity of Glasgow's history; and omitting a well-detailed plan for the handling of the objects collected for the exhibition (p.124/125). When King was passed over for 'promotion' to the post of 'Keeper of the City's Social History' (a newly invented post which stood above curator in museum hierarchy, thus by default demoting King²¹) intense local reaction, galvanised by the Workers City group, soon developed the Elspeth King matter into a national issue; part of a wider critique of the Year of Culture per se. For Tretter, 'Glasgow's Glasgow' and the 'Elspeth King Affair' symbolize key moments in the battle over the representation of Glasgow during the Year of Culture.

Oppositional Spaces? 'Merchant City', or, Workers City

For Tretter, the ability of city governments and private partners to capture monopoly rents is predicated on the fact that "the images and symbols associated with a city, and particularly its cultural infrastructure, have a clearly defined and stable meaning" (p.118). By creating a market brand, city governments hope to harness the collective symbolic capital of the city in order to compete with other global cities for inward investment. Thus, he argues, by mobilising around the 'Elspeth King Affair' the Workers City group challenged the stability of this meaning and offered "an alternative narrative about the proper use of Glasgow's history and culture that was important to questioning who owned the cultural heritage and legacy of the city" (p.128). But this summary of events, while sustaining a useful corrective to city boosterism, conforms to a somewhat rigid adherence to Harvey's hypothesis. For Tretter, the monopolization of Glasgow's culture in 1990 increased the "sentimental investment" that people made in their locale, enhancing "people's conscious attachment to Glasgow, their sense of belonging, and their



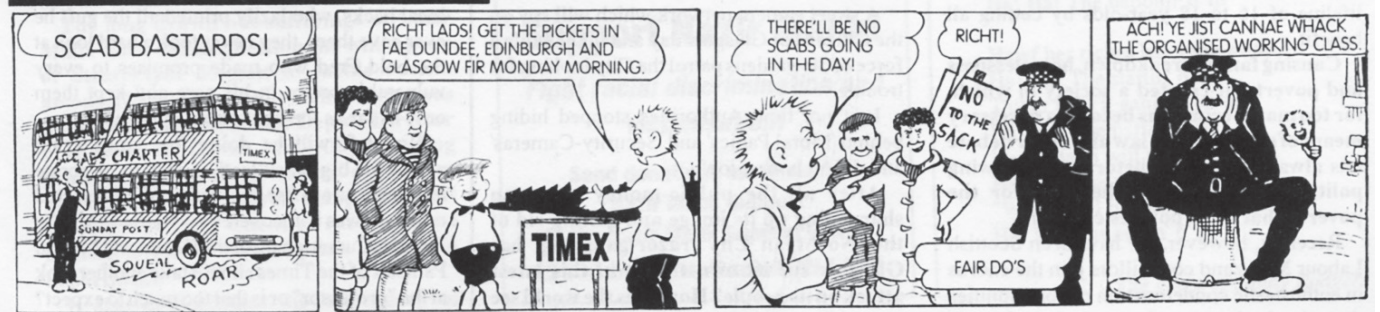
● Yuppie Nightmare: Commercial property prices in Glasgow have sunk from £13 to £6 per square foot.

awareness of their place in a longer historical continuum" (p.127). But this apparently sudden transformation of consciousness would surely come as a surprise to the *Workers City* group, many of whom had been engaged in political struggle in Glasgow for decades. By concentrating specifically on the *cultural* and representational issues thrown up by the Year of Culture, and by neglecting the wider social and economic contradictions in Glasgow that had long motivated *Workers City* activity, he leaves their arguments adrift on an a-historical, symbolic plane, rather than embedding their *activity* within a continuum of resistance which carries important precedents for the present. The *Workers City* campaign was less about "belonging" and more about becoming; *change* through collective praxis.

The campaign to safeguard the jobs of Elspeth King and Michael Donnelly (her colleague at People's Palace) was initiated by the *Workers City* group primarily through the commitment of Hugh Savage. Savage had for some time been a member of 'Friends of the Peoples Palace', a group dedicated to supporting and fundraising activities for the Palace, and a group supremely aware of their "place in a longer historical continuum", long before the City of Culture year. According to *Workers City*, it was precisely King's efforts in resuscitating Glasgow's radical, working-class history that had seen her passed over for the post of Keeper of the Museum. This despite the fact that King was more qualified than Mark O'Neil (who was eventually appointed), and despite the fact that she had transformed a "semi-derelict building into one of the finest social history museums in Europe", winning the European Museum of the year award (1981) and the British Museum of the year award (1983) in the process²².

That Savage was interested in King's archival and historical work should come as no surprise. A personal friend of legendary Clydeside radical Harry Mcshane²³; veteran of the Apprentices Strike in 1941; shop steward in John Brown's shipyard (blacklisted for union activity); and long time community activist in the permanently deprived east of Glasgow, Savage, along with other *Workers City* members Leslie Forster and Ned Donaldson, were part of the Glasgow Labour History Workshop research group. They published books in their own right such as *All for the Cause: Willie Nairn, 1856-1902*, *Stonebreaker, Philosopher, Marxist*, and *Sell and Be Damned, The Glasgow Merrylee Housing Scandal of 1951* (Forster and Donaldson). They also contributed to several critical books on Glasgow's radical history, including *The Singer Strike Clydebank, 1911*; *Militant Workers: Labour and Class Conflict on the Clyde 1900-1950*, and *Roots of Red Clydeside 1910-1914*. James Kelman recently paid tribute to their research work in an introduction to Savage's autobiography: "Reclaiming history, exhibiting the radical tradition; the work they accomplished is inspirational, packed full of information: to read them is to come into contact with a roll-call of outstanding men and women"²⁴. As William Clark, another member of *Workers City*, recently said of the group: "Within *Workers City* we could see that the city officials thought of culture as something to be brought into the city. They could not countenance the fact that culture *already* existed, was indeed indigenous"²⁵. An idea of this 'indigenous' culture can be found in James. D Young's account of the progressive impact of socialist ideas from the refugees of the Paris Commune – who gained political asylum from the working-class communities of Glasgow – or the links of solidarity between the Glaswegian and Dublin working-class²⁶.

Meanwhile, back at Dundee...



While the Year of Culture may have instigated a response from the *Workers City* group, it was far from "sentimental", and far from pivotal in shaping the consciousness of the group. Indeed, historical consciousness was what prompted the *Workers City* name, specifically chosen to challenge the newly invented 'Merchant City' branding²⁷ that had been applied to the gentrifying area in the east of the city centre as part of the attempt to "recreate Glasgow's entrepreneurial spirit". The group pointed out that the branding of the 'Merchant City' was a craven attempt to link modern entrepreneurs with those of Glasgow's past – thereby *honouring* the role of the 'tobacco lords' (who once lived in the area), despite their "deep involvement" in a colonial economy "which could not have functioned without an entrenched and expanding system of slave labour"²⁸. As James Kelman noted at the time, Glasgow's tobacco traders trafficked in degradation, and generated wealth "by the simple expedience of not paying the price of labour"²⁹. This critical historical approach (for which they were lambasted³⁰) can now be seen as a central legacy, though not the sole merit, of the *Workers City* group. While city elites have continually attempted to erase Glasgow's history – radical and otherwise – the *Workers City* group, at the minimum, created "a record of opposition, some other history"³¹.

Tretter is right to emphasize this critique, but it was more than just "vocal opposition" or "analysis" (p.128). He suggests that "the more profound" contradiction between the Council's attempts to monopolise the Year of Culture and the "perceived injustice" of this endeavour led to *Workers City* opposition. But cultural 'regeneration' is typically only a small, if important, mainly symbolic part of wider strategies of dispossession³² and the *Workers City* group were well aware of that. A central campaign that the group initiated (which Tretter barely acknowledges) was the battle to save Glasgow Green from privatisation and 'development'. The Green has long been associated with radical working-class gatherings³³, and remains to this day a part of the city's 'common good' assets. The group's victory against the Green's privatisation (alongside numerous supporters and collaborators) can be seen as one of its central achievements. The group also practically supported campaigns against pollution in Carmyle and Rutherglen and Action on Asbestos, crucial solidarity work in a city riddled with industrial pollution. Moreover, looking through back issues of *The Keelie*, "a scandal mongering organ"³⁴ distributed freely and anonymously by the *Workers City* group, the range of critical work draws attention to anti-poll tax campaigns, anti-militarism, housing campaigns, gentrification ("yuppification"), council corruption, the routing of the steel and oil industries, privatization of common good assets, governance, and the deplorable health and wealth disparities of a city notorious for them to this day.³⁵

Tretter's aporias obscure the fact that the *Workers City* analysis was rooted in the social and economic contradictions of Glasgow in a city-wide context *during* the Year of Culture, but by no means confined to it: "The money had to come from somewhere. Major cuts have already taken place in the areas precisely concerned with art and culture. The public funding of

libraries, art galleries and museums; swimming baths, public parks and public halls; all are being cut drastically...Prime assets not to mention services to the community are being closed down and sold off altogether, to private developers, to big business. What has been celebrated as art in all its diversity is there to behold, a quite ruthless assault on the culture of the city"³⁶. The struggle was neither merely event-based, nor limited to the symbolic plane, but contested over a series of class-based economic processes and their underlying contradictions; and this struggle was worked out at the level of *praxis* as well as in the field of representation as the Glasgow Green campaign clearly shows.

The Rent Devours All...

A major flaw in Tretter's argument is the chronic lack of evidence he uses to support his otherwise helpful critique of monopoly rent seeking. By curtailing his examples up to the year 1990 (though his article was published in 2009), and by restricting his outlook to the role of culture in monopoly, he fails to update the wider processes of monopoly that have made the city such a paragon of neoliberal urbanism. Even a brief summary suggests the scale of the city's capitulation to market forces. Most pertinent to Tretter's position is the transfer of the management of Glasgow's *entire* cultural and leisure services to Culture and Sport Glasgow (CSG), an arm's length body composed of two companies; one limited by guarantee with charitable status, and a 'trading arm' to carry out functions not deemed charitable. For Rebecca Gordon Nesbitt this transfer represents "the wholesale takeover of culture by business interests"³⁷. The total list of assets transferred, including all community and leisure services in public ownership, encompasses a remarkable diversity of services lost from the public sector³⁸. Controversial proposals to allow private companies to develop businesses in the Botanic Gardens and Pollok Park – successfully resisted³⁹ – suggest the direction ahead; as does a projected wave of industrial action in the face of closures and pay cuts⁴⁰. Further, CSG's recent Venues Review further proposes to close over a dozen community facilities, including a library and a swimming pool, and to reduce opening hours for museums and sports facilities. Among other deeply controversial arms length external organisations (ALEO's) that Glasgow City Council has calved out of former city departments are City Building⁴¹, offering building services (2,200 staff transferred), and Cordia⁴² which operates out-sourced services contracts for IT, catering and cleaning (8,792 staff transferred).

Glasgow's common good⁴³ assets, held in the common good fund, have long come under threat from 'mismanagement' and lack of accountability due to a lack of a comprehensive register of assets – others might say the looting of the common good fund is far from accidental. The latest threat to the fund comes from a new ALEO – City Property (Glasgow) LLP – a subsidiary to which the council will be transferring the rights to 1,400 income-generating commercial properties in exchange for a loan of £120m from Barclays Bank, ostensibly in order to fill a funding black hole⁴⁴. Taking the role of property services, which was formerly part of the City Council's development and regeneration services, City Property (Glasgow) LLP will work at 'arms length' from the City Council in order to "deliver to the market" a wide range of properties⁴⁵. The ALEO will now be responsible for the management and sale of all Glasgow City Council's 'non-operational' property assets and the management of the Council's major ground leases.



The loan will have to be paid back at an expected average rate of £10m a year for 20 years, costing the City Council £80 million (which represents a 66% interest rate over the period). As the interest rates will be reset five years into the deal, there is a considerable risk that the final deal might cost “significantly more than expected”; if so, the risk is part guaranteed by the council and the costs will be borne by further sales of city council properties to the private sector or an extension of the loan⁴⁶. But it’s not only the ALEO’s who profit: a recent scathing report reveals an “elaborate system of political patronage” at work in the ALEO’s, with councillors sharing ‘top-up’ payments of £400,000 – over and above their public salaries – for landing a role on the board on these ever proliferating quangos⁴⁷.

Tretter can be forgiven for missing these recent developments, but not for failing to adequately account for previous acts of enclosure in Glasgow. Thatcher’s UK-wide ‘right to buy’ policy in the Housing Act of 1980 encouraged council housing tenants to buy their homes with enormous discounts, effectively *subsidising* the mass sell-off of social assets way below their market value and instigating a wave of speculation, rent seeking, and the debt-financed housing bubble in the process. By 2003, after the most desirable properties had been bought up, Glasgow transferred its *entire* remaining public sector housing supply (81,000 council homes, the second largest stock in Britain) to a ‘registered social landlord’, Glasgow Housing Association (GHA). GHA have since been “crisis-hit” by a slew of management resignations and controversies over proposed ‘second-stage’ transfers to Local Housing Organisations (LHO’s) which have failed to materialise on anything like the scale promised⁴⁸. Moreover, a spate of demolitions has seen the total amount of social housing reduced from 81,000 to under 62,000 by 2009⁴⁹, with creeping marketisation through ‘mixed-housing’ tenure providing a neoliberal alibi for further privatisation of the city’s ‘social’ (no longer *public*) housing. This in a context where the number of Council and Housing Association homes is now at its lowest for fifty years in Scotland⁵⁰.

In education, a £1.2 billion contract for new build construction and the management of the city’s *entire* secondary school system over 30 years was given to 3ED consortium in 2002 as part of a PFI scheme with *£451 million public subsidy* from the Scottish Government (raiding public budgets from other local authorities), and with *all the risk underwritten by the City Council*⁵¹. According to Unison, the bill for the Council will be £36.4m more than if the schools were funded by conventional finance, and they estimate that Glasgow lost seven school swimming pools, along with staff common rooms and classroom reductions, in the deal⁵². Moreover, 25 primary schools and nurseries have recently been subject to closure in the city, despite furious resistance – including school occupations⁵³ – from parents, and local community groups in the affected areas. Meanwhile, in transport, after the UK-wide deregulation and privatisation of state-run Passenger Transport Executives (PTE’s) in 1986, Strathclyde Transport became Strathclyde Buses, an “arms length” bus company, and by 1993 was sold to its employees. Competition, and the inevitable process of monopolisation which accompanies it, ensured that by 1996 Strathclyde Buses was sold off to First Bus, (now First Group), who now monopolise most of the bus routes in Glasgow in an inadequate and increasingly expensive service⁵⁴. While the subway, currently run by scandal-riven⁵⁵ Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT), has been starved of investment and now requires a £400 million modernisation plan – with “closure an option” if finance is not forthcoming according to a recent *Herald* report⁵⁶. Those with eyes to see will note that disinvestment is often a *deliberate strategy* to lower asset values, making it more profitable for asset-stripping private investors. Privatisation, or a public private partnership, is sure to be on the agenda sooner or

THERE'S
A LOT
GLASGOWING
ON IN 1990.
CULTURAL CAPITAL
OF EUROPE.

THERE'S
A LOT OF
CON GOWING
ON IN
1990.

later⁵⁷, and we might expect that this will be a new battleground for basic services in the near future.

Subsidy Junkies and Flexible Friends...

The Merchant City – the so-called ‘style mile’ – is the most heavily promoted example of Glasgow’s alleged urban renaissance. The ‘Arts Led Property Strategy’⁵⁸ the City Council are pursuing in the area has roots in the early ‘80s when public subsidies were directed into the area to re-brand the city centre and pump-prime private property development. In the ‘60s, the area was home to warehouse storage, clothing manufacture, and the regional fruit and vegetable market. These uses were threatened by the proposed southwards expansion of The University of Strathclyde, and, as part of Glasgow’s comprehensive urban renewal policies, the east flank of a proposed inner ring road. The relocation of the fruit and vegetable market to Blochairn in 1968 precipitated a “crisis” that caused “a ripple or domino effect on a range of related uses and caused up to 80 businesses to cease trading in the area”⁵⁹. Moreover, the University plans failed to materialise, and the ring road plan was abandoned in that form. The planning uncertainties led to blight and eventually demolition orders, and the Merchant City went into further decline over the following decade.⁶⁰

By 1980, a third of the property was in Glasgow District Council (GDC) ownership and a third of property was vacant (with the majority of this vacant property owned by GDC). Overall, the physical fabric was neglected, and the area was designated a ‘Special Project Area’ where “active participation by the public sector was considered a necessary factor towards attracting a renewed market interest”⁶¹. Realising its property interests in the area, GDC began to offer subsidy packages to stimulate market interest – including conversion grants, ‘positive’ planning controls, and the release of buildings to developers. A more promotional and entrepreneurial approach was being signalled; and, as Jones and Patrick have noted, for hesitant investors, “public subsidy would bridge the gap between a desirable objective and a profitable opportunity”⁶². From 1982 – with

Albion Building, Merchant Court and Blackfriars Court – conversions, rehabilitations and new-build gradually began to take shape in the area. These developments were assisted with new planning criteria whose “underlying principle was that of flexibility”⁶³. In 1984, with major GDC and Scottish Development Agency (SDA) assistance, the Ingram Square project constructed 239 housing units as part of its comprehensive street block renewal scheme.

Gradually the demography of the area began to shift as buildings were converted to apartments and cultural amenities via public subsidy. Fashion and retail outlets emerged: The exclusive Italian Centre, incorporating shops, flats, offices, restaurant, and café bar, was opened around a courtyard and a ‘fashion theme’. By 1991, flats with gymnasiums, pool and porterage services were being marketed from £120,000 and above. The area now fostered forms of shopping with specialist and leisure themes in order to attract tourist revenue to the city centre, and by the early ‘90s the city centre ‘lifestyle’ opportunities afforded by the Merchant City were attracting “the relatively modest numbers of people who seek the lifestyle that such an arrangement offers”⁶⁴. Glasgow District Council figures show, for instance, that purchases of houses in Ingram Square in the Merchant City were overwhelmingly by professionals and managers, with other non-manual workers taking much of the rest – as Jones and Patrick comment: “the overriding impression these surveys imbue is that the demand predominantly stems from young professionals on relatively high incomes”⁶⁵. These affluent young professionals were of course often termed ‘yuppies’: a term that was correctly associated with gentrification and loaded with negative connotations.⁶⁶

By 1991, £12 million of public money had been invested in the Merchant City. The logic of this financial assistance was partly that of ‘pump priming’ a market from which the public-sector would eventually be withdrawn, but, unsurprisingly, the private sector developed a taste for such public largesse: “the availability of public finance has perhaps inevitably influenced land values. Potential assistance has been built into many site valuations with the result that the land values have been bid up”⁶⁷. Jones and Patrick, summarising their analysis of the Merchant City redevelopment in 1992, stated that the Merchant City – despite such sustained public support – was, “still dependent on public funds and therefore its future relies on these monies continuing”; moreover: “It would be very difficult for the public sector to withdraw its support without the painful acceptance that the current momentum would fall by the wayside. The conundrum of rising land values and the ongoing need for public assistance is therefore likely to continue”⁶⁸. And indeed it has. Property owners in the Merchant City area continue to see their rents protected and enhanced by public subsidy. Glasgow City Council have made improvements to ‘urban realm’ works worth £10 million⁶⁹ – including the laying of Italian porphyry stone “which sparkles when wet and comes in a variety of colour variations [sic]”, at a cost of £500,000 in John Street⁷⁰. The Merchant City Townscape Heritage Initiative, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Glasgow City Council and Scottish Enterprise has contributed another £4.5 million between 2000 and the present; while the Merchant City Tourism and Marketing Co-operative Limited (MCTMC) receives public funding from Scottish Enterprise and Visit Scotland to carry on a campaign of unadulterated propaganda for businesses in the area. MCTMC, via public agencies, also supports the ‘Merchants Market’, a market for expensive high-quality produce which opened three months after the brutal closure of working-class Paddy’s Market nearby, despite a sustained campaign⁷¹. In a typical act of historical erasure the new ‘merchants’ market stands over the site of the former fruit and vegetable market relocated to Blochairn.

Rent neither grows from the soil nor emanates from brickwork. The enclosures of public housing, and the gentrification of the Merchant City, depended, and still depend, on new legal and policy frameworks, and new forms of economic and social relations (not to discount corruption and cronyism). Despite the mythology of risk-taking market-led and entrepreneurial activity, neoliberal urban development is almost without exception state-led and heavily state-financed. This fact is now a banality. In an exemplary account, Swyngedouw *et al*'s comprehensive survey of large-scale neoliberal urbanization in North America and Western Europe notes: "Traditional and well-documented processes of socialization of cost and risk and privatization of the possible benefits are central characteristics of most UDPs"⁷². In 2008, at the State of the City Economy conference, disgraced former City Council leader Steven Purcell⁷³ only reiterated neoliberal convention when he promised that "Team Glasgow"⁷⁴ (an unelected cabal of business leaders purporting to represent the wider interests of 'Glasgow') would do everything they could to help businesses 'cope with the downturn': "The first thing that all public bodies, including my own Council, must do, is to examine where we can help business by being more flexible and willing to do things differently. This is no time for unnecessary rules and processes; this is a time to do everything we can to help"⁷⁵. The "relaxation" of development rules; "flexible loans" for business; payment deferrals on development sites; more "flexibility" on "land disposal"; a £36 million 'Better Glasgow' fund to support developers; "flexible" grants for social housing providers, and a "build now, pay later" policy that amounts to free land deals for developers with no clear and transparent plan on future payment details⁷⁶ – no wonder Purcell was so lionised by the business community for his 'vision'!

In case there was any doubt over his, and the City Council's, affiliations, Purcell told the Conference's assembled business leaders: "We are on your side; we want to work with you to ensure that businesses and jobs stay in Glasgow. And we will do everything within our powers to ensure that happens"⁷⁷. Tretter is right to say that monopoly rents can be derived from pre-existing monopolies arising from special qualities and 'marks of distinction' relating to place: the Merchant City is a prime example of an area whose *image* has been *constructed* in order to attract tourist revenue and investment in property portfolios. But by concentrating on the economic aspects of the monopoly of culture, he makes the mistake of political economy by assuming the eternity of pre-existing sets of economic relations. He thus fails to adequately account for the economic and political processes by which an area like the Merchant City can be turned from a working-class warehousing and market district into a 'cultural quarter' with a "cohesive Victorian architectural grid". Rent does not grow from the soil, and private property development and the rentier economy in Glasgow, as elsewhere, have been dependent on a interdictory forms of security and surveillance⁷⁸, and a form of looting and enclosure indelibly marked by a socialisation of risk and privatisation of profit.

History Against the Grain

"The Workers City group points towards the future. It is of groups like ours the future shall be made. We have nothing to apologise for".

Farquhar McLay, 1990⁷⁹.

Tretter is right to validate the *Workers City* group's ability to offer "an alternative narrative" and disclose a "different version" about the proper use and representation of Glasgow's cultural and historical legacy (p.128). But his somewhat bloodless account rests too heavily on *representational* questions – however valid those may be – and fails to excavate the *Workers City*



group's deeper questioning of the roots of labour in the extraction of value from the city. The group correctly claimed that Glasgow's 'cultural regeneration' was based almost entirely upon low paid service sector jobs. Even Richard Florida, the chief purveyor of the 'creative class' thesis, acknowledges that, "There is a strong correlation between inequality and creativity: the more creative a region is, the more inequality you will find there"⁸⁰. As Gerry Mooney, a persistent critic of Glasgow's social and economic policies, has later reiterated, with the support from numerous studies: "the arguments that cultural regeneration would do little if anything for the vast majority of Glaswegians is surely borne out by even a brief discussion of the social and economic problems that have faced the City in the period since 1990"⁸¹. The low-wage, insecure service economy is ultimately the "support infrastructure" of the so-called 'creative age', and the growth of this burgeoning and increasingly precarious service class must be understood *alongside* the deeply uneven development of the "creative economy"⁸². Over 40% of households in Glasgow live below the poverty line, and as a recent academic report states, even beyond endemic unemployment, "the norm" is "becoming a low-wage and casualised work environment, or an unregulated and degrading training system"⁸³.

The *Workers City* group, while raising similar issues around 1990, were criticized by the right for daring to use the term 'working-class'; and later by the left for adopting an allegedly 'workerist' position⁸⁴. 'Workerism' in the UK left has been associated negatively with a privileging of industrial and manufacturing workers at the expense of other social and labour sectors. Thus, as James Kelman relates, the *Workers City* group was caricatured as "the ghost of Stalinist past and workerist future" by the municipal authorities⁸⁵. More productive for this discussion is criticism from within the left: while broadly supportive of the group, some suggested that behind the *Workers City* critique of service sector jobs there was "implicitly" almost an unreflexive nostalgia for *real* working-class jobs (in shipbuilding, in engineering and in factory work, etc). For critics, the allegedly workerist position neglected the fact that service sector work has always been a part of Glasgow's economy, at the same time as it reified a masculine subject position by privileging certain forms of labour. While this type of critique has played a necessary and constructive part in developing new forms of organisation appropriate to temporal shifts in class composition⁸⁶, the criticism seems misplaced, or at least over-emphasised, in the case of *Workers City*. The group's conception of 'work' was much more complex than that of workerism as outlined above.

The traditional conception of 'workerism' should be distinguished first of all from the workerism ('Operaismo') of the Italian autonomist Marxist movement that emerged in Italy during the '60s and '70s⁸⁷. Defining itself as 'autonomous' from the dominant Italian Communist Party (PCI), the movement was distinguished by its ambivalence to PCI's 'productivism' and *Party ideology*, as well as its tendency to seek out radical potentialities in new forms of *class composition* in the wider 'social factory'. This latter included

production and *reproduction* within and outside the workplace, and comprised, as well as 'workers' in the wage-labour relation, the unemployed and those deemed outside the waged work doing housework, caring, family maintenance, etc: the 'hidden work' that supports the wage labour relation and capital. While it would be wrong to attribute an autonomist perspective retrospectively to the *Workers City* group, Farquhar McLay's preface to *The Reckoning* – a collection of *Workers City* writing from 1990 – presents a far from traditional workerist homage to the nobility of manufacturing workers and the unions:

"The old jobs are vanishing. Nostalgia for these outmoded forms of production – now a marketable commodity in art and theatre – is surely misplaced. It was hard, miserable toil in deplorable conditions"⁸⁸.

McLay understood that we are *all* alienated under capitalism and the wage labour relation: "Work has been degraded to the point where it is totally devoid of any meaning outside the consumer values of capitalism"⁸⁹. His anti-productivist critique of "trade union betrayal" and the "pursuit of delusory wage claims" reflects many of the same concerns found in autonomous Marxism: "Was it right that people's labour should be just another commodity to be bought and sold in the market place? That a person's chances in life should be determined by the market value of his labour? That certain people's labour should have a higher value than that of others? That some people's labour should have no entitlement whatever...While the wages system remains intact all the authoritarian relationships proceeding therefrom will continue to thrive throughout the whole of society, in every job and profession..."⁹⁰. McLay edited *The Reckoning*, and wrote both the introduction and the preface; we can surely deduce that his views were shared to some extent by the rest of the group. The same ambivalence to wage-labour, for instance, is frequently reflected in James Kelman's fiction; the striking *instability* of his working class subjects. Few have full-time work, and when they do, it tends to be low-paid and insecure. Frequently, his chosen subjects are unemployed. Far from reifying a *fixed* proletarian embedded in the wage-labour relation, his fiction – *A Disaffection*, *The Busconductor Hines*, *How Late it Was, How Late*, for instance – instead explores, among other things, the tension between the uncertain coming into being of social and imaginative lines of flight, and the alienating social and economic relations that tend to repress them. These tensions are explored throughout the 'social factory' – in work, in benefit offices, in parkland, in pubs and bookies and in the home. Social identity is never restricted to the workplace.

Henri Lefebvre's influential insight in *The Production of Space* (1974) was that the "survival of capitalism" no longer depended on production that merely appears in space, but instead on the production of space itself, in and through the process of capitalist development. Spatial production is a political instrument that determines the *reproduction of social relations of production* through the control and hierarchisation of public spaces. There is then, a politics of space, because *space is political*. With the financialisation of the economy over the past few decades, the link between finance and an urban *rentier economy* has become more explicit. David Harvey has shown how large-scale urban infrastructural processes (Haussman's Paris, Robert Moses's post-war US suburbanisation, modern China, etc) provide a potent "spatial fix" for the dumping of capital's surplus profit, especially in times of over-accumulation and recession⁹¹. Meanwhile Michael Hudson has shown that most wealth in the US economy is generated by rent-yielding property: "real estate remains the economy's largest asset, and further analysis makes it clear that land accounts for most of the gains in real estate valuation"⁹². Stock-market speculation is largely a rent-seeking activity as companies are raided for their land or other property income. The

speculation process inflates prices for these assets, making property and financial speculation more attractive than new forms of productive capital formation: "The bulk of this *rentier* income is not being spent on expanding the means of production or raising living standards. It is plowed back into the purchase of property and financial securities already in place – legal rights and claims for payment *extracted* from the economy at large"⁹³. The property bubble, and the financial crisis it precipitated, is largely a financial phenomenon borne from this form of social looting. Rental incomes are an unproductive "free lunch" gouged from the economy at large, forcing an ever-higher proportion of wages to be spent on rent and basic social subsistence, and denying it for more socially useful means.

As Harvey argues, since the urban process is a major channel of surplus use, then struggles over the "Right to The City"⁹⁴ can no longer be dismissed as 'secondary' in relation to traditional manufacturing struggles. When McLay suggested, in 1990, that groups like *Workers City* pointed towards the future, he talked of the traditional image of the worker *as producer of wealth* becoming more problematic every day. Indeed, the manufacturing sector now accounts for only 6% of the Glasgow labour market, while low-paid services work now accounts for 88% of the workforce⁹⁵. As Harvey and Hudson have shown, wealth is more than ever non-reproductive and non-wealth generating for the vast majority of people. It is perhaps ironic then that the *Workers City* group could provide a model for a form of politics that isn't *confined to the workplace*, fighting for limited gains at work that are stolen away by inflationary price rises at the level of social reproduction. Urban struggles over *social reproduction*, social space and everyday life, as Lefebvre and theorists from the autonomist Marxist tradition understood, must come to the fore if social gains in the workplace are to be protected at the level of social totality. The *Workers City* group, while by no means a perfect model⁹⁶, overcame narrow specialisations – 'the artist', 'the academic', 'the worker', 'the activist', 'the unemployed' – to form a non-party political, horizontal, place-based movement 'from below' whose arguments resonate more than ever today – despite all the booster talk of urban renaissance in Glasgow. Herein lies their importance for understanding the struggles of today. James D. Young cited Walter Benjamin when he talked in *The Reckoning* of a low level of historical consciousness being an indispensable part of ruling class control over working people. Remembering *Workers City* means brushing history against the grain, and bringing the fractious constellations of the past into a critical and productive relationship with the present; *Workers City* are an image of the future, not of the past.

Notes

1. <http://england.shelter.org.uk/home>
2. For instances of, and a critique of this position, see, Mooney, G, *Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation? Critical Reflections on Glasgow, European City of Culture 1990*, *Local Economy*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 327-340, November 2004.
3. It is less Glasgow's cultural infrastructure, and more its surplus labour pool and low-wage economy that attracts capital investment to Glasgow. Moreover, as Richard Florida, chief proponent of the 'creative class' thesis admits, the cultural pilots of regeneration are entirely dependent on a "supporting infrastructure" of low-wage service workers to satisfy their consumption demands.
4. Henri Lefebvre, 'Reflections on the Politics of Space', in, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays* (eds Brenner and Elden), Minnesota Press, 2009.
5. Zukin, S, *The Cultures of Cities*, Blackwell Publishers, 2000, p.2.
6. In *The Rise of the Creative Classes*, for instance, Richard Florida acknowledges that behind the hyperbole of his creative class theory lies inequality. In fact: "There is a strong correlation between inequality and creativity: the more creative a region is, the more inequality you will find there".
7. For a seminal account of this process see, Harvey,



- D, 'From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism', *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Humkan Geography*, Vol. 71, No. 1, *The Roots of Geographical Change: 1973 to the Present*. (1989), pp.3-17.
8. For an authoritative account of the changing scales of governance in large-scale urban developments projects, see, Swyngedou et al, 'Neoliberal Urbanization in Europe: Large-scale Urban Development Projects and the New Urban Policy', in *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, Blackwell Publishers, 2002, p.209.
 9. The 'commons' refers to resources that are collectively owned. This can include everything from land to software. The process by which the commons are transformed into private property is often termed enclosure. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_commons
 10. Harvey, D, 'The Art of Rent: Globalisation, Monopoly and the Commodification of Culture', *Socialist Register*, 2002.
 11. Ibid.
 12. Caution is required here: not everywhere is 'post-fordist'. China and India, for instance, ensure that production continues at the expense of a massive (and massively exploited) workforce.
 13. Gerry Mooney correctly notes that cities such as Glasgow are all too frequently reified and presented as "homogeneous locales of common interests" in city branding exercises, yet: "'Glasgow' does not 'do' things, it is not an agent and it is not 'Glasgow' that 'wins' or 'loses', or that is undergoing a 'renewal', but particular (and if recent evidence is anything to go by, fewer) groups of its citizens living in particular parts of the City". Mooney, G, 'Cultural Policy as Urban Transformation? Critical Reflections on Glasgow, European City of Culture 1990', *Local Economy*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 327-340, November 2004.
 14. The campaign was replete with a Mr. Men style 'Mr. Happy', and the advertising concentrated on, "the ABC1 market - namely those people who make or influence decisions, particularly of a commercial nature". <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/YourCouncil/PublicRelations/Campaigns/glasgowsmilesbetter.htm>
 15. For a clear account of the changing UK and Scottish policy context at this time, see, Boyle, R (1989) 'Partnership in practice: An assessment of public-private collaboration in urban regeneration – a case study of Glasgow Action', *Local Government Studies*, 15:2, p.17-28
 16. "It is noticeable, however, that all were well-connected in the Glasgow and Scottish business community, having numerous inter-locking directorships (particularly in Scottish financial institutions), membership of the local Chamber of Commerce, and the CBI [...] leadership, control and direction was to be firmly located in the private sector". Boyle, Ibid. p.21.
 17. Sir. Norman Macfarlane, for instance, was director of Clydesdale Bank; Director of Edinburgh Fund Managers and Chair UK Distillers, among numerous other roles, while he was Chair of Glasgow Action.
 18. Boyle, R (1989) 'Partnership in practice: An assessment of public-private collaboration in urban regeneration – a case study of Glasgow Action', *Local Government Studies*
 19. Ibid.
 20. Kelman, J, 'Storm in the Palace', in, McLay, F (ed), *The Reckoning*. Clydeside Press, 1990, p.52.
 21. Ibid.
 22. Ibid. (p.50)
 23. See, McShane, H and Smith, J, *No Mean Fighter*, Pluto Press, 1975.
 24. Savage, H, *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.16.
 25. Clark, W, in, Savage, H, *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.258.
 26. James D Young, 'The May Day Celebrations in Scotland', in, *The Reckoning*, Clydeside Press, 1990, p.141-3.
 27. Sean Damer noted, in 1990, that the 'Merchant City' moniker was, "...a complete invention of environmental consultants. Nobody in Glasgow had heard this term

- ten years ago". Damer, Sean, *Glasgow: Going for a Song*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1990.
28. For a widely accepted mainstream historical summary, see for instance, Devine, T, M, *Scotland's Empire: 1600-1815*, Penguin, p.73-74. See also, Stephen Mullen, 'Ae Fond Kiss, and Then We Sever', *Variant*, Issue 35: <http://www.variant.org.uk/35texts/AeFondKiss.html>
29. Kelman, J, *Some Recent Attacks: Essays Cultural & Political*, AK Press, 1992, p.2.
30. "The authorities rejected criticism and condemned the critics, especially those who used the phrase 'working-class'. They described them as philistines and kill-joys. It was an odd line of attack since a few of the critics were well-known writers, artists and musicians". James Kelman, in, Savage, H, *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.10.
31. Brendan McLaughlin, group member, cited by William Clark. Savage, H, *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.260.
32. Take a walk around Dublin's 'Temple Bar Area', then walk down to the Docklands to see how cultural regeneration fosters an image of the city that masks land-grabbing and rent-seeking property development on an enormous scale. Glasgow's 'Merchant City' has a similar function in relation to wider development strategies along the Clyde river corridor and the 'regeneration' of the East end.
33. <http://libcom.org/history/battle-green-john-taylor-caldwell>
34. "For decades in Scotland, the name 'keelie' has been applied pejoratively to Glaswegians, denoting 'low-class vulgar beings'. Absolutely appropriate for the Workers City group". James Kelman, Introduction, Savage, H, *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.13
35. A recent WHO health report noted that "inequalities are killing people on a grand scale". A boy growing up in Calton for instance can expect to live 28 years less than in wealthy Lenzie. Cited from a WHO report on health and well-being, in, Collins, C, *To Banker, From Bankies. Incapacity Benefit: Myths and Realities: Perspectives on Welfare Reform from the Clydebank Independent Resource Centre*. CIRC. Funded by Oxfam GB, April 2009.
36. Kelman, J, 'Art and Subsidy, and the Continuing Politics of Culture City', *Some Recent Attacks: Essays Cultural & Political*, AK Press, 1992, p.32.
37. Gordon-Nesbitt, Rebecca, 'The New Bohemia', *Variant*, Issue 32. <http://www.variant.org.uk/32texts/CSG.html>
38. See page. 71 for full list of transferred assets: <http://www.scottishcommons.org/docs/BusinessCase.pdf>
39. 'Go Ape cancels Pollock Park Development': <http://www.indymediScotland.org/node/15857>
'Botanics Nightclub plans scrapped': http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/glasgow_and_west/7352237.stm
40. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/politics/storm-looms-as-private-revolution-in-scotland-s-councils-gathers-pace-1.1013063>
41. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/politics/purcell-saga-continues-as-further-contracts-to-labour-donors-emerge-1.1016526>
42. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/politics/revealed-how-purcell-used-council-spin-off-company-to-wine-and-dine-labour-colleagues-1.1014929>
43. For a good summary of common good issues, see: <http://www.scottishcommons.org/commongood.htm>
44. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/business/corporate-sme/mortgaging-property-will-cost-80m-but-glasgow-insists-it-s-a-good-deal-1.1004279>
45. <http://www.citypropertyglasgow.co.uk/>
46. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/business/corporate-sme/mortgaging-property-will-cost-80m-but-glasgow-insists-it-s-a-good-deal-1.1004279>
47. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/revealed-cronyism-at-heart-of-purcell-s-council-1.1017770>
48. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/politics/troubleshooters-called-in-at-crisis-hit-gha-1.821496>
49. See, page.53: <http://www.gha.org.uk/content/mediaassets/doc/AnnualReport2009.pdf>
50. <http://scottishtenant.wordpress.com/2009/07/19/syndicated-from-bbc-shelter-report-confirms-housing-squeeze/>
51. http://www.cipfa.org.uk/thejournal/download/jour_vol1_no1_d.pdf
52. <http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/comms/pfi.html#pfireasons>
53. For news and links, see: <http://sosglasgow.wordpress.com/> and, <http://libcom.org/news/glasgow-threatened-schools-occupied-parents-03042009#comment-form>
54. http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/news/editor-s-picks-ignore/kids-clubbers-hit-by-bus-fares-hike-1.1015641?pollId=poll_1_1015643&questionId=0&forward=http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk:80/news/editor-s-picks-ignore/kids-clubbers-hit-by-bus-fares-hike-1.1015641&answerId=1&cookieSet=true
55. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/scotland/article7035061.ece>
56. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/transport-environment/closure-an-option-for-glasgow-s-outdated-underground-1.1015598>
57. See <http://www.subway2020.com/Glasgow%20Subway%202020.doc> especially, p.17.
58. See <http://www.variant.org.uk/34texts/mechantcity34.html>
59. Jones, C and Patrick, J, 'The Merchant City As an Example of Housing-Led Regeneration', in, Healy, P et al (eds), *Rebuilding The City: Property-Led Urban Regeneration*, E & FN Spon, 1992, p.129.
60. Given that disinvestment is often a motor of urban redevelopment – a strictly logical outcome of market rationality – one wonders if this process wasn't at least partially engineered via an incremental process of 'creative destruction'? Much more work would need to be done to 'prove' such a thesis, but the question should, at the very least, be asked.
61. Jones, C and Patrick, J, 'The Merchant City As an Example of Housing-Led Regeneration', in, Healy, P et al (eds), *Rebuilding The City: Property-Led Urban Regeneration*, E & FN Spon, 1992, p.129.
62. Ibid, p.132.
63. Ibid, p.136.
64. Ibid, p.138.
65. Ibid, p.139.
66. For an amusing and prescient take on 'yuppification' in Glasgow see *Down Among the Big Boys* (1993), Directed by Charles Gormley, and written by Scotland's Jim Allen - Peter McDougall.
67. Ibid, p.143, 144.
68. Ibid, p.144.
69. See 19, <http://www.glasgowmerchantcity.net/downloads/devmap0609.pdf>
70. <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/News/Archives/2006/July/JohnStBrunswickStpublicrealm.htm>
71. See, <http://www.squidoo.com/paddysmarket>. For a critical overview, see section 'Governing Through Crime: Managing the Dark Side' in: <http://www.variant.org.uk/34texts/mechantcity34.html>
72. See Swyngedou et al, 'Neoliberal Urbanization in Europe: Large-Scale Urban Development Projects and the New Urban Policy', in, *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, Blackwell Publishing, 2002, p.201-209.
73. And here we are not in the least bit concerned with Steven Purcell's private or personal life, but rather his role in facilitating the looting of public assets in Glasgow on an unprecedented scale. <http://www.heraldscotland.com/revealed-cronyism-at-heart-of-purcell-s-council-1.1017770>
74. Including, Sir Tom Hunter, Willie Haughey, Jim McColl, Akmal Khushi and Dr Lesley Sawyers. Interestingly, Willie Haughey - the Labour Party's biggest Scottish donor - recently received £700,000 from Clyde Gateway Developments, a quango run by Iain Manson, a former advisor to Steven Purcell: <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/politics/company-linked-to-purcell-in-700-000-land-deal-with-labour-donor-1.1014924>
75. <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/News/Archives/2008/November/stateofthecityeconomy2008.htm>
76. <http://news.scotsman.com/latestnews/SNP--casts-doubt-over-4706969.jp>
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87. For an excellent summary of autonomist Marxism, see, Wright, Steve, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism*, Pluto Press, 2002, p.3. For an influential account of operismo within - and against - the currents of Marxism, see, Cleaver, H, *Reading Capital Politically*, Harvester Press, 1979. Especially, p.51-66.
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89. Ibid.
90. Ibid (p.9)
91. <http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2740>
92. http://www.cooperativeindividualism.org/hudson-michael_the-rentier-economy.html
93. Ibid.
94. The phrase comes from a Henri Lefebvre essay in 1968, and despite its connotations of bourgeois liberal democracy and "equal rights", it usefully focuses attention on, and provides a rallying point for, the control and management of urban processes.
95. <http://www.variant.org.uk/events/Doc7Poverty/BeyondAspiration.pdf>
96. William Clark, a younger group member at the time, has alluded to his "difficulty" with some generational attitudes towards the sexes in the group. *Born Up a Close: Memoirs of a Brighton boy*, Argyll Publishing, 2006, p.259.