

Geography Days, Tampere University
Keynote lecture, Friday 4 November at 11:00 (Pinni B1100 auditorium)

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Social Junk

Abstract: Queerness is a residue, an elision, a shadowy presence within urban theory since the queer – and the non-normative of various description – is everywhere within mainstream urban thought and praxis; as prop, as foil, as problem in need of correction, as object out of place. This talk charts a tradition of queer urban studies as it emerged out of the dominant grammar of *The City*, the 1925 collection of essays by Chicago School sociologists Ernest Burgess and Robert Park. Still widely taught today as ‘foundational’ to urban theory, and reissued for a second time in 2019, this text is not only ripe for queer analysis. Its authors played a pivotal, paradoxical and widely unrecognized role in spurring on queer and other critical ‘underdog’ scholarship on the urban and urbanization that exists today. This text’s role in the history of queer/ urban studies as both facilitator and foil shows that while there is no ‘queer urban theory’ per se, radical queer aims may in fact be better met without one.