

Informal Housing: Reflections on Theory and Evidence in the U.S. Context

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Urban Informality

Informal activity 'is unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated' (Castells and Portes, 1989).

Informality entails economic activities that 'fail to adhere to the established rules, or are denied their protection' (Feige, 1990).

Informality is not a sector of the economy, but rather a mode of development (Roy, 2005).

Regulatory Regimes

- Subdivision regulation
- Zoning
- Property rights
- Property transfer
- Building codes

Durst and Wegmann (2017)

US Manifestations of Informal Housing

- Non-compliance
- Non-enforcement
- Deregulation

Durst and Wegmann (2017)

Informality as Non-compliance



Informality as Non-enforcement



Informality as Deregulation



Generalizations and Avenues for Future Research

- Interwoven with formal aspects of the market
- Largely hidden from view
- Geographically varied (Durst and Wegmann, 2017)
 - But how, where, and why?
- (Re)production of informality (Ward, 2014)

References

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