Author's response

April 27, 2020

Contents

1   Response to Editor

Clear urban or planning policy recommendations are needed. A section of Takeaway for Practice is encouraged to be included in this paper. (This section may be a short section. But it should be clear enough to present your policy recommendations for both local and international practice.)

done!

2 Response to Reviewer #1

First, we genuniely thank you for comments–thanks to you, our paper is now better, more through and rigurious, more careful and deeper–thank you!

This is a thought-provoking paper presenting interesting analysis of US General Social Survey data to explore the relationship of what the authors describe as misanthropy measures to their definition of urbanity.

thank you; indeed, we didn't highlight enough nevelty of this research, and now we do it better

Nevertheless, I find the title quite misleading and overall I feel that the key arguments are quite weak and not supported by the literature reviewed or the analysis.

We agree in many ways, and we took steps to improve the literature review, interpret findings more carefully, and tone down key arguments where necessary.

In general we think, there were several major shortcommings: 1) we hardly presented the bright side of largest cities and didn't keep the balance of pros and cons. 2) We didn't pay enough attention to our result that misanthropy rose recently most in smaller places and has just reached about the same level as in the largest places. 3) We missed some literature and we didn't elaborate enough in some areas. 4) Literature, results, and conclusions were not well connected. We strived to fix these shortcomings.

We changed the title from statement to question. We added statement about generalizability of the results in the abstract.

In general, Throught the manuscript, we toned down the language where necessary, made it more specific and careful.

First, the review of literature appears to be one sided and mostly dated

yes! agreed! We added on the bright side of urbanism; the datedness, however, has mostly to do with the fact that the research on misanthropy is dated. This is an advantage for our paper! We have highlighted that our research is novel and the extant study of misanthropy is dated.

and in need of more elaboration, especially when discussing evidence suggesting that misanthropy is associated with living in cities.

done; we have elaborated on the mechanism or path from urbanism to misanthropy; and we have added more literature

There is a strong need to justify the choice of literature and discuss any limitations arising from the date in which the work reviewed is published.

Yes! We missed this point and simply didnt explain that there is indeed very little literature and mostly dated–these are simply limitation of the literature, not our paper! But we didnt make this point clearly enough, now we do.

The authors also seems to suggest that living in cities is always associated with crime and other social problems (is this the case for all cities?

No! of course not! But unfortunaly, Indeed such impression could be made. Thank you for this point. It's now fixed–we're more careful in language and toned it down TODO.

but per crime and virus etc pretty linear–bettencourt–tho check again exactly what they look at!

In addition please note that we do control for city ills, so its cities themselves not their ills. But we now note that ideally for future research, we should look at specific places, as you say with low crime, parks etc TODO/MAYBE alsoredy done

Great question! Now we consider it verbatim in paper in discussion section and answer there.

Also please note that the following that were already in text help to address this question:

"Political ideology, marital status, health, SWB, and notably race and fear of crime explain away much of the city disadvantage, but not all of it. Hence, the conclusion is that similar to studies examining SWB in urban areas (Okulicz-Kozaryn and Mazelis, 2016), it is cities, themselves, their core characteristics, and not city problems that are related to misanthropy."

"Can the relationship between urbanicity and misanthropy be spurious? Cities have many problems: notably urban poverty and urban crime–these problems could intensify misanthropy. In other words, if it were not for urban problems, then urbanicity would not cause misanthropy. There are many urban problems, and we cannot control for all of them, but we controlled for the key urban problem leading to misanthropy: fear of crime. We also controlled for personal income."

without any proper justification or evidence and some very poor argumentation.

We added more evidence and argumentation

For instance, I find the analogy to the experiments with rats and overcrowding highly irrelevant. Measuring overcrowding typically refers to how many people live in a house and there could be overcrowded houses in rural areas as well as urban areas.

We agree that our point could have been made better and that it may seem strinking and irrelevant –These experiments are a classic, cited over 1,000 times, including in social science and urban studies specifically `https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=5%2C31&sciodt=0%2C31&cites=147447258112130829&scipsc=1&q=cities&btnG=` and elucidate the biological mechanism between population density and social pathology. Which we illustrate now better with striking examples of actual crowding in the largest cities.

Another key indicator which seems to be omitted in the discussion, is quality of life in cities and rural areas and there is a strong need to properly control for this before making any strong conclusions.

Agreed! We actually do control considerably for quality of life in cities, just did't make it clear! Now we do!

In addition, diversity can have a highly positive impact on both economic performance (e.g. see recent work by Viola von Berlepsch and Andres Rodriguez-Pose) and by extension to well-being and trust (especially if there is a melting pot process). It would be interesting to consider such work in contrast to the statements in the paper about links between heterogeneity and anomie and deviance!

Yes, good point, we now make the point that diversity can have a highly positive impact on both economic performance. Yet there is literature showing negative effect of heterogeneity on trust and SWB, we cite that literature now as well.

And there is also a need to properly engage with literature and evidence suggesting a different story (there is very limited discussion of such literature mostly in a footnote) especially when using expressions such as American intellectuals almost universally expressed ambivalence... In this context, it is also interesting to consider the context in which a lot of the work of scholars the authors cite was conceived and produced (e.g. Socrates also lived in a city!).

Done!

we moved out much of text out of footnotes to the body–thank you! (we actually realized the same independently–that too much of improtant text was burried in footnotes)

we added pro-urban literature and we talk now about historical context

Per misanthorpy specifically: Again, we make point clear that there is not much literature on misanthropy and cities, and this is advantage as this paper clearly fills this important gap. But now we do add more related literature.

On a more technical level, I would expect more elaboration and justification regarding missing observations (e.g. it is pointed out that Political ideology, subjective wellbeing (SWB) and health controls were postponed till model 4 because there are many missing observations.).

Done!

Also, when discussing the results, it would be interesting to offer a more critical reflection of the trends and whether cities that are or have become more socially cohesive are also more likely to have higher levels of trust (and overall lower levels of misanthropy as defined by the authors) and whether it is factors such as income and wealth inequality that are associated with trust rather than urban/rural divisions. To that end there is interesting work by social epidemiologists which is highly relevant as well as recent literature on the geographies of discontent (with some studies suggesting that discontent may be higher in rural areas and this may be particularly relevant to the US , the study area of the paper).

Yes! we totally agree! In fact this was our own indpenededent reflection upon rereading this paper now after few months. We now wlaborate on over time trends. And make this more central part of the story.
!!!yes geographies of discontent–google scholar that and it totally supports our explanaion that smaller places are left behind!!!! right so do say that in paper–but do say here that the only "geographies of discontent" we found on google scholar were for europe; we do however cite hanson that makes the point very well for the US
and we were not sure exactly what studies in social epidemiology you mean
no cities, have had lowest and declining trust for decacdes mYcity book and there is argument in the literature that the triumph of the city has less to do with cities improving than rural areas declining mycitybook and no urban malise for millenials

Overall, I strongly feel that there is a need to reconsider the title of the paper and the overall message (given the points and concerns I express above) and revise the paper accordingly (also discussing the results in more detail and in support of the arguments made if this is possible)

TODO: again emphasize trend of increasing isanhropy in rural
TODO: change conclusion more!
we changed the title from statement to question
Abstract and conclusions were edited in 2 ways to reflect empirical results closer: toned down and added over-time trend, where misanthropy mist increased for smaller places
so again after having another look and thought about results more–we added a key point throught:
Cities are misanthropic, but urban misanthropy is on decline. TODO: say it earlier in interpretation and in abs We don't intrepret it as cities are improving their condition– misanthropy level is not declining in cities, but the convergence is due to increasing misanthropy in smaller areas–hence we intrepret it as smaller places left behind. citemybook

References

Okulicz-Kozaryn, A. and J. M. Mazelis (2016): "Urbanism and Happiness: A Test of Wirth's Theory on Urban Life," *Urban Studies*.