

Author's response
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1 Response to Editor

Dear Professor Zhao,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a revised draft. We are grateful to the reviewers and for your constructive comments. We have revised the manuscript in light of the many useful suggestions. We list below in inline format our brief responses to reviewers' comments and attach at the end tracked changes that show precisely the additions and deletions in the manuscript.

In light of the peer reviewers' recommendations we are hopeful that you will be able to make a positive decision. We appreciate your consideration. Thank you.

Best,
the Authors

2 Response to Reviewer #2

Thank you for the opportunity to review this original and interesting article on the relationship between urbanicity and misanthropy. As a reviewer in a later round of reviews, I will try to provide specific comments that can push the author(s) forward in the direction the revisions have taken.

Thank you for acknowledging a later round of reviews and the direction taken!

First, I still find that the organization and content of the Introduction could be improved. Right now it is organized around quotes and a prior study rather than a more general problem statement and motivation, which should then become briefly grounded in the literature and a definition of the concepts and their origins (including misanthropy and urbanicity - this would mean to move/merge/cut the section with definitions into the Introduction), before pointing out to key gaps and possible research avenues. From there, the authors should articulate their research questions, methods, and core finding, before briefly laying out the organization of the paper. In sum, I would recommend that the authors "just" have an introduction organized around 5-6 clear and well tied together paragraphs. And, as said, I would thus bring much of the mini section on Definitions into the Introduction.

We significantly edited the introduction. It is much more succinct and essentially "just" an introduction now. As suggested, we now start with a "general problem statement and motivation", "briefly grounded in the literature" and we moved the misanthropy origin and definition up as well. We did not include the definition for urbanicity in the intro because readers of Cities are well familiar with the concept, but we do discuss how urbanicity is measured in the methods section.

Second, why are the sections called "Theory: Urbanism-Misanthropy Pathways" and the one called "Literature: Urbanism and Distrust/Dislike of Humankind (Misanthropy) separate from one another, and then also separate from and followed by two sub-sections on Gaps and Bias in the Literature and Advantages of City Life? This organization makes the theoretical groundings of the paper very unwoven together. My recommendation would be to have a main Literature section that starts with a subsection on 1) How urbanicity and positive social sentiments are associated (that urban bias you describe later), 2) How urbanicity, in contrast, has been shown to contribute to misanthropy - the many ways in which it does (how) and the drivers (why) of misanthropy in cities. In that Literature section the beginning of it could just start with a more expanded version of what is misanthropy (a reduced version of page 5 and 7) before delving in the HOW and WHY subsections. And then 3) the literature section would finish with a few paragraphs on gaps and the study contribution - just a few short paragraphs at the end before the Methods section. All the gaps should be clearly woven together at the end

Done! We edited and reorganized the literature section as well: The literature review section now starts with a subsection on the positive aspects of city life, then we discuss how urbanicity, in contrast, has been shown to contribute to misanthropy and then finish with a few paragraphs on gaps and the study contribution. This helped tremendously with the flow of the paper and in connecting the arguments together. Thank you for providing us with such detailed feedback!

Third, I will add some general recommendations: a) You could bring in some of the literature that shows how cities (and urban neighborhoods) also contribute to a greater sense of community, and thus possibly to trust into the first subsection of the Lit Review (the one I recommend as reorganization). See these two studies for example: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652619329737?casa_token=_Zk7xZpH3M8AAAAA:C-q96D-94zKJ3D-Jj5ai0jmUySVUznk0TKy5ckR0BjF_reWoYmcg-peAjl0dWuYcSLtFPUCpQ
https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4419-8646-7_14

Done! Thank you for these suggestions! We incorporated these studies into the paper and discuss how cities also contribute to a greater sense of community as suggested.

b) Many of the statements throughout the literature sections are quite strong, generalized, and not nuanced, I would ensure to add a bit more nuance and disclaimer throughout. For example "Humans have ingroup preference or homophily, and accordingly, lack preference for or dislike heterogeneity" could become "In general, humans have been shown to XXX". Or "several studies point to XXX"

Done! We have revised the whole manuscript and have made arguments more nuanced throughout.

c) In the discussion about overcrowding/density in cities, I would recommend to add a bit more to the discussion in terms of the drivers underpinning overcrowding/small apartment living etc, including uneven urban development, gentrification and displacement, as well as inequality in large globalizing cities.

Done! Please refer to page 5.

d) Many of your points are "dropped" in the middle or in paragraphs. Please review your narrative to make the literature section flow better, and have better transitions and connections. There are some bold statements that, again, require context and nuance - or might simply be omitted. For example, the text "it is important to remember that the modern city and urbanization have started with the industrial revolution. The main rationale for urbanism has been capitalistic and economic".

Done! We have revised the manuscript throughout to address this issue. We have improved the flow of the paper and tried to make the transitions and connections between arguments better. We have also toned down and made arguments more nuanced. Also, to improve the flow, several parts were either moved to the appendix or omitted.

e) Similarly, Some paragraphs are too short and just seem "dropped in", including those about Pile and Nietzsche, without being logically interwoven in the analysis. The paragraph/reference about Wilson's work is also oddly written. You don't need to explain how many times it has been cited.

Done! We've moved the discussion about Pile and Nietzsche to the appendix, along with the reference to Wilson's work.

f) Some statements are also a bit too grandiose such as "Such gap in the literature is extraordinarily rare". Or even "there appears to be a pro-urban bias" - can one really talk about a bias? Maybe it would be more nuanced to simply articulate that there is a discussion and debate and the contribution of cities towards social bonds/trust vs. misanthropy - as I suggested above in regard to the organization of the paper.

Done! We removed the statements you suggested from the manuscript, "Such gap in the literature is extraordinarily rare", "pro-urban bias," and we have also toned down on the discussion of a pro-urban bias. Overall, we re-organized the paper per your suggestion and toned down throughout.

g) Both in the literature sections and in Results, some points are repeated - for example about misanthropy and what drives misanthropy in the literature or results about larger vs. smaller urban areas and the outcome variables

Done! We have carefully revised the manuscript to avoid being repetitive.

h) In the policy and planning implication sections, you could also add the increased problem of isolation and loneliness that planners have to grapple with, which was both exacerbated yet also somewhat addressed by the rise of social support networks during covid.

Done! Thank you! Your suggestions helped us produce a much richer and influential paper. Thank you.

3 Response to Reviewer #3

Interesting paper with thorough analysis and discussion of annual survey data since the 70s.

Thank you!

1. Apparently this study was already presented in the ISQOLS Virtual conference in August 2021, see abstract 189 on p. 89: https://rdmobile-palermo-production.s3.amazonaws.com/36ae4456-2093-4c98-a287-d5ad7ab50291/event-14231/271615874-Book-of-Abstracts_ISQOLS2021.pdf Please clarify if a paper was or will be published from the conference presentation. In either case, please clarify what is the difference with the present manuscript.

Thank you for asking. We want to make it clear that this paper was not published anywhere, and will not be published in any conference proceedings or in any type of "conference publication." The paper is only under consideration for publication at this journal (Cities). Given the blind review process, we'll simply state that many scholars present preliminary results of their analysis in conferences to receive useful and important feedback from other scholars to help them draft their manuscript and make their analysis stronger. Usually, these conference presentations entail very preliminary results that are generalized during short oral presentation—given the time constraint in conference presentations (5 to 10 minutes) there's not much time to share much of the study with the audience.

2. The structure of the paper was not clear. Please add a title for the first section starting on p. 2. Based on the way the text is currently structured I would suggest naming the first main section as Introduction (starting from p. 2) and having "Methods" (p. 8) as section 2. This would mean that the present headings from p.2 to p.8 would become sub-headings of the main heading 1. Introduction.

Done! We added a title for the first section now is titled 'Introduction;' Per subheadings: since we completely edited and re-organized the intro following the recommendation from the other reviewer, now there's no need for a subsection here. We did add subheadings to the literature review to help better organize the paper. Please refer to our comments to the other reviewer above. We tried to compromise and follow advice from all reviewers.

3. The paragraph starting "We conduct empirical quantitative analyses over the years 1972-2016 to test the urban misanthropy thesis. The paper is structured as follows:" on p.2 and ending "misanthropy has been growing there most steeply" on p. 3 already reveals your main statements and conclusions. Those cannot be presented before the analysis. Please move those statements to the Results or Conclusions sections if the data supports them. Please introduce only the article structure on p. 2-3.

Done! We moved these statements to the results and conclusion sections per your suggestion.

4. The section before Methods (p. 2 to p. 8) needs restructuring; the order of the sub-sections is not logical. In general, an Introduction is easier to follow if you start from general largely known things before going into details. You claim that most of the existing literature is pro-urban; it would be logical to start your literature review with that literature explaining the main benefits and disadvantages of urban life based on the literature. You could then continue by identifying gaps in literature related to negative aspects of urban life and continue with misanthropy related literature review.

Done! Note: the other reviewer also recommended that we start the literature review discussing the advantages of city life. So we re-structured the manuscript accordingly to improve logic and flow. Thank you for making this suggestion.

5. I would recommend avoiding the term "pro-urban bias" in the introduction but instead report what the existing literature reports on the advantages and disadvantages of urban life and what are the main gaps.

Done! Yes, thank you! We dropped the term completely from the paper and made the arguments much more nuanced when discussing a pro-urban proclivity in the literature. We appreciate your feedback and comments! Thank you for helping us make this paper much stronger.

4 Tracked Text Changes

(see next page)