

2012

## Transposing the Urban to the Mall: Routes, Relationships, and Resistance in Two Santiago, Chile, Shopping Centers

Joel Stillerman  
*Grand Valley State University, stillejo@gvsu.edu*

Rodrigo Salcedo  
*Universidad Catolica del Maule*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/soc\\_articles](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/soc_articles)

---

### ScholarWorks Citation

Stillerman, Joel and Salcedo, Rodrigo, "Transposing the Urban to the Mall: Routes, Relationships, and Resistance in Two Santiago, Chile, Shopping Centers" (2012). *Peer Reviewed Articles*. 1.  
[https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/soc\\_articles/1](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/soc_articles/1)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology Department at ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Peer Reviewed Articles by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gvsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gvsu.edu).

---

# Transposing the Urban to the Mall: Routes, Relationships, and Resistance in Two Santiago, Chile, Shopping Centers

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography  
41(3) 309–336

© The Author(s) 2012

Reprints and permission:

[sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav](http://sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav)

DOI: 10.1177/0891241611434551

<http://jce.sagepub.com>



Joel Stillerman<sup>1</sup> and Rodrigo Salcedo<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Scholars understand shopping malls as central commercial and social settings. Some argue that malls' designs attract and seduce consumers, while others contend that mall authorities exclude vulnerable groups and prohibit free expression. Ethnographic studies, by contrast, document how consumers interpret and shape malls as social settings. Drawing on qualitative research in two Santiago, Chile, malls, we contend that Santiago's patterns of socioeconomic segregation and ample public transport facilitate cross-class interactions in malls. These characteristics encourage visitors to transpose practices and meanings from other public settings to the mall, drawing on rules for public interaction. Residents adapt mall infrastructures for noncommercial uses and engage in informal and formal resistance, reflecting conflicts between abstract and social space. The analysis shows that distinctive urbanization patterns significantly shape how consumers access and use malls as social spaces.

## Keywords

shopping centers, consumer behavior, cities, Chile

---

<sup>1</sup>Grand Valley State University, USA

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Católica del Maule, Talca, Chile

## Corresponding Author:

Joel Stillerman, Department of Sociology, Grand Valley State University, 2166 Au Sable Hall, Allendale, MI 49401

Email: [stillerman.joel6@gmail.com](mailto:stillerman.joel6@gmail.com)

Scholars have analyzed the economic and social significance of shopping malls over several decades. Some argue that mall developers construct appealing designs that seduce shoppers into spending money, while others contend that mall administrators control vulnerable groups' access to malls and limit free expression. In contrast, qualitative studies demonstrate that consumers actively interpret and use malls, and at times flout mall owners' authority. Based on qualitative research in two Santiago, Chile, malls, we argue that distinctive patterns of socioeconomic segregation and urban transit there shape how visitors access and use malls. Malls' integration into the city's streetscape permits cross-class encounters and encourages consumers to transpose practices from other urban settings to malls. Consumers have a reflexive relationship to malls: they are skillful, mindful, and self-critical shoppers, in contrast to the "seduced consumers" described by others. Consumers use malls as performance stages to enact meaningful relationships and engage in playful interactions (Goffman 1963, 1971). Finally, consumers engage in informal and formal resistance to mall authorities, illustrating conflicts between abstract and social space (Lefebvre 1991). Malls' distinctive physical and social integration into Latin American cities allows consumers to shape their social environments more than consumers in U.S. suburban malls. However, the social diversity of Santiago, Chile malls helps us understand retail centers in declining U.S. inner ring suburbs (Berger 2005; Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2004; Parlette and Cowen 2011).

Santiago is an important setting for examining malls. While much research focuses on Anglo-European malls, shopping centers have recently expanded in Chile and other countries of the Global South. Moreover, Chilean capital has financed mall development in Argentina, Perú, and other Latin American countries, giving Chilean mall developers growing influence in the region. Furthermore, Chilean scholars and journalists actively debate the social implications of mall development, yet discussions rely primarily on speculation (Moulian 1998; Tironi 1999) and aggregate data on investments or purchases (Nicholls et al. 2000; PNUD 2002). Two published ethnographies of malls in Chile (Farías 2009; Stillerman 2006) provide important insights on mall consumers, but a more detailed qualitative study of mall users' meaningful practices in Santiago will yield insights for malls elsewhere in the Global South.

We argue that unlike the archetypal U.S. mall located in racially segregated suburbs and accessible via automobile (Cohen 1996; Lofland 1998), consumers arrive to Chilean malls on foot or via public transportation because of Santiago's distinctive pattern of socioeconomic segregation. The poor live in peripheral areas, and malls' recent arrival to these zones has permitted the integration of middle- and low-income consumers. Further, most Santiago

citizens rely on public transportation, making malls accessible to diverse residents (Sabatini and Arenas 2000; Salcedo 2003, 2004; Stillerman 2006).

Additionally, unlike the United States, Santiago's malls coexist with traditional street markets, which exemplify the large role of informal employment there (Portes and Hoffman 2003). In socioeconomically mixed areas, malls form part of diverse commercial systems including informal street and flea markets, supermarkets, and independent local businesses. Thus, mall administrators have limited success excluding poor visitors and malls compete with traditional markets (D'Andrea, Stenger, and Goebel-Krstelj 2004).

Consequently, many Santiago consumers treat malls like other urban settings such as streets, parks, homes, and offices. They transpose daily activities like picnics, work tasks, boisterous drinking, and courtship rituals to the mall, taking advantage of the public interaction rule of civil inattention (Goffman 1963). Many consumers also visit malls but spend little or no money, seeking entertainment or companionship. Further, some customer practices violate clearly displayed mall rules. Likewise, unlike U.S. malls, where owners use legal measures to curtail protests and political expression, striking workers can legally picket inside malls. National legal and political contexts shape consumers' exercise of rights to free expression in malls.

We develop this argument by reviewing theoretical and empirical research on malls as well as behavior in public settings. Next, we outline our research design and methods. We proceed to our findings and conclude with some implications of our analysis.

## **Understanding Malls**

Research on malls and other themed retail environments clusters around three foci. First, authors argue that mall designs facilitate their commercial success and shape consumer identities. Second, scholars contend that mall authorities implement policies that heighten socioeconomic segregation and stifle free speech. Third, scholars consider consumers' practices in and interpretations of malls. We integrate this last approach with Goffman's (1963, 1971) studies of behavior in public places, Certeau's (1984) concept of "tactics," and Lefebvre's (1991) understanding of space.

### *Malls and Consumer Seduction*

Several authors argue that malls seduce consumers with appealing visual images drawn from advertising and popular culture. Mall designers fashion ideological "dreamland spaces" that appeal to customers' senses (Goss 1999:

45), cultivate consumer fantasy (Crawford 1992), and attract consumers with nostalgic urban and small town images that disguise owners' profit-making goals (Gottdiener 1997, 2003). Managers seek to purge malls of the spontaneity and diverse emotions found on streets, converting them into "islands of the living dead" (Ritzer 2003).

Because these accounts rely on semiotic analysis, they have no data on consumer practices or interpretations of malls. The absence of direct data on consumers may help explain why these authors do not consider the possibility that consumers may creatively interpret and appropriate malls in ways that contradict managers' goals (Certeau 1984; Fiske 1989 [2000]). Further, these authors have a static view of malls as physical structures impervious to modification through human use. Lefebvre (1991) developed a more persuasive argument that space is simultaneously perceived (physically tangible), conceived (designed by powerful actors), and lived (symbolically understood). Further, he saw endemic conflicts between abstract space (designed to maximize profits and government control) and social space (occupied by users). Understanding malls only as conceived spaces misses how consumers perceive and inhabit them. Similarly, viewing malls solely as abstract space ignores the possibility that consumers may oppose malls' encroachments on their everyday lives.<sup>1</sup>

### *Malls as Instruments of Social Segregation*

Scholars focused on social segregation argue that malls exclude disadvantaged populations and erode public space. Mall authorities exclude or harass racial minorities, the poor, or teenagers through surveillance and control. Managers use security guards and cameras to screen customers and discourage theft (Lofland 1998; Staeheli and Mitchell 2006).

Mall authorities depict shopping centers as public spaces, but routinely expel some groups and restrict users' exercise of free speech rights. Managers favor "community" (defined as white, middle-class shoppers) over an inclusive public sphere. Further, real estate brokers, federal agencies, and local governments have historically excluded African Americans and Hispanics from access to mortgages in suburban areas, and suburban residents rely primarily on automobile transport (Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2004). Because malls are commonly located in suburbs, low-income urban minority residents without cars have difficulty accessing them. Malls rely primarily on white, middle-class customers (Cohen 1996; Lofland 1998; Staeheli and Mitchell 2006).

However, mall developers in developing world cities have fewer opportunities to isolate shopping centers from the poor than do their U.S. counterparts. Malls' common location near traditional markets or poor communities there allows the poor to access them by foot or public transit (Abaza 2001; Sabatini and Arenas 2000). Poor people in Cape Town, South Africa, and Mumbai, India, have gained access to malls over time (Anjaria 2008; Houssay-Hozschuch and Teppo 2009). Even in the United States, developers have created open-air malls or streetscapes adjacent to malls because of enclosed malls' declining popularity (Berger 2005).

### *Consumers' Interpretation and Use of Malls*

In contrast to the above perspectives, ethnographic research examines consumer practices and interpretations in malls. Scholars review low-level conflicts between mall authorities and both teens and the elderly. Researchers also consider how mall visitors construct group identities in relation to malls, and how they ascribe meanings to malls.

Teens and the elderly act independently from mall managers and may thwart the latter's goals. Teenage girls visit malls not to make purchases but to socialize, play video games, and watch boys (Haytko and Baker 2004); members of youth subcultures attempt to control "turf" within malls (Bermúdez 2003, 2008); unemployed youth and the elderly visit malls and spend little or no money (Fisk 1989[2000]; Lewis 1990); and teens engage in prohibited behaviors such as panhandling or drug sales (Lewis 1989, 1990; Matthews et al. 2000; Ortiz 1994)

Consumers attach local meanings to malls. In London, members of ethnic groups construct and defend identities through mall visits (Miller et al. 1998); Egyptian youth flout parental authority by engaging in courtship rituals in malls and attend "traditional" coffee houses that blur the boundary between mall and bazaar (Abaza 2001; compare Baldauf 2008 on Dubai); and Mumbai, India malls face stiff competition from street vendors (Anjaria 2008).

While mall ethnographies yield important insights, we argue that they can be strengthened through analyses of public behavior, consumer appropriation, and resistance (Certeau 1984), and conflicts between abstract and social space (Lefebvre 1991).

### *Interactions in Public*

Behavior in malls builds on interactional rules found in other public settings. Goffman (1963, 1971) focuses on individuals' knowledge of the implicit

rules for social engagement, suggesting that these rules normally protect individuals from unwanted exchanges with strangers (1963, 246).

Individuals expect strangers to show civil inattention—acknowledgment of other persons without demanding their involvement (Goffman 1963, 84). Unaccompanied persons may shield themselves from contact through “side involvements,” like smoking, which may also obscure the individual’s psychological disengagement (50-58). However, certain public settings (like bars) function as “open spaces” that encourage interaction (134). Exceptions to expectations of noninvolvement with others appear in specific settings, whereby observers accept public kissing on beaches and in parks, and parents discipline children in family areas of restaurants (167-69). Individuals may violate interaction rules by, for example, deliberately making noise in order to express alienation toward an individual, group, or institution (213).

Goffman (1971) describes “territories of the self”—personal space and goods allowing individuals to claim space against external interference and to deter others’ “intrusions” (28-61). Individuals in groups provide “tie-signs” indicating their intimate relationships with others, like travelling in a “family flock” (20), or couples displaying an “arm lock” (196). These legitimate connections to others limit public scrutiny of violations of interaction rules (21).

Goffman’s work illuminates our findings. The fact that public interaction rules function in malls indicates that the cultural boundaries between malls and other public settings are weaker than expected. Further, individuals and groups import interaction rules, relationships, and affective ties into malls. Shopping centers function within broader social settings rather than existing in isolation.

## **Local Context and Research Sites**

We conducted research for this article in two malls in Santiago, Chile. The Santiago metropolitan area has approximately 6.7 million residents (PNUD 2011), includes 37 semi-autonomous local governments, is Chile’s largest metro area, is the seat of its national government, and serves as the country’s economic and cultural center.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, military ruler Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990) opened Chile’s economy to global markets, seeking to reverse decades-old protectionist policies. Free market policies, including tariff reductions, privatization of public firms, and deregulation of urban land markets made imported consumer goods cheaper and sparked the entry of new retail formats to Chile (Constable and Valenzuela 1991; Martínez and Díaz 1996; PNUD 2002).

In 1982 during a deep recession, Chile's first mall, Parque Arauco, opened in a wealthy eastern Santiago district, garnering little initial success. Nonetheless, after the 1990 return of civilian rule, several malls opened amid sustained economic growth and rising wages. The most successful malls are located in the mixed-income areas of Southern and Western Santiago as well as provincial cities. This success coincided with the expanded supply of department store credit cards for low- and middle-income consumers as well as the growth of big-box stores, fast-food chains, and multiplex cinemas (Cáceres and Farías 1999; Cox, Parrado, and Ruiz-Tagle 2006; PNUD 2002; Van Bavel and Sell-Trujillo 2003).

We collected data for this article in Plaza Vespucio and Florida Center, located in La Florida, a large populous southeastern Santiago municipality. This district's population began to grow in the 1960s, but took off in the 1980s. The area includes poor housing project residents and middle-class owners of single-family homes and townhouses. The municipality has at least three traditional commercial avenues, supermarkets, and new strip centers. Small-scale commerce—convenience stores, bakeries, fruit shops, and street markets—thrives off the main avenues (Farías 2009).

Plaza Vespucio is the largest shopping center in Chile, measuring 180,000 m<sup>2</sup> and receiving more than thirty-six million visitors a year (close to the Mall of America's forty million). The mall sits at the intersection of Vicuña Mackenna Avenue and Américo Vespucio highway, which surrounds Santiago. The shopping center opened in 1990 and developers remodeled it several times, opening it to neighboring streets. The mall has bus and light rail links, allowing diverse visitors to arrive from across Santiago. It contains a library, an art museum, a performance venue, a movie theater, an open-air boulevard, an indoor food court, and an adjacent clinic and community college. Owners just inaugurated an upscale wing featuring luxury boutiques. The mall includes numerous themed elements, such as multinational chains (e.g., McDonald's and Starbucks), movie theaters, play areas, and a video/bowling arcade. Plaza Vespucio is almost always crowded (Pérez 2010).

Florida Center, located less than one mile away, opened in 2003 as an upscale competitor to Plaza Vespucio. The mall maintains the enclosed format of traditional suburban U.S. malls. Its three floors include department stores, a supermarket, boutiques, a cineplex, a video and bowling center, and ample parking, and the mall regularly hosts circuses in its parking lot. It has more limited amenities than Plaza Vespucio. Florida Center is connected to bus lines and a rail station, but does not sit at a major intersection. The mall is only busy on evenings and weekends. Themed decorations are more subdued than those at Plaza Vespucio. The food court's ceiling resembles a



circus tent, perhaps referencing outdoor circuses. Seasonal displays marking holidays or upcoming fashion trends decorate the halls and food court.

### *Data Selection, Collection, and Analysis*

This article reports on data gathered for a large multimethod research project on mall users in La Florida. During initial research at Florida Center, we conducted nonparticipant observation in the mall's food court to gain familiarity with the range of individuals and groups in the mall's busiest area (compare Manzo 2005). The authors led a seven-person team, including four graduate students (two male and two female) and three professors (all male). From late August until early October 2008, each member conducted several visits to the mall and most observations lasted about one hour. We conducted a total of twenty-seven hours of observation.

During weekly meetings, we interpreted emerging categories to guide subsequent observations. We also observed the mall's entry points, corridors, and atmospherics (lighting, music, and visual cues). On three occasions, researchers recorded their observations while shopping to check hypotheses about mall users against our own perceptions.

Following Glaser and Strauss (1967), we adopted an inductive approach to data gathering, using theoretical sampling across groups, activities, locations, and times/days. Once we reached theoretical saturation, we sought direct data via interviews. Using a snowball sample, four researchers (one male and one female graduate student and two male professors) interviewed two female food court employees, the female owner of a kiosk located outside the mall, a female shopper at Plaza Vespucio and a male shopper at Florida Center. Interviews lasted approximately one hour and included participant observation of shopping practices or "walkabouts." One researcher asked employees about their work experiences and mall shopping patterns. The other researchers asked shoppers and the kiosk owner about their motivations for shopping at the mall, frequency of visits, preferred stores, shopping styles, and experiences at the different malls they visit.

We originally planned additional interviews at Florida Center. Two factors led us to shift to Plaza Vespucio. First, at Florida Center, light customer flow and our limited personal connections to mall users restricted our ability to conduct additional interviews. Second, at this juncture team members shifted to different data-gathering activities envisioned in our initial research proposal (photographic documentation, a local business census, and analysis of print media) [see, e.g., Pérez 2010].

We overcame these obstacles at Plaza Vespucio. Two female undergraduate students joined the research team and from July through August 2009, they interviewed and observed shoppers there. The researchers began with nonparticipant observation in different areas of the mall to sample across groups, days, and times. They then approached shoppers at the mall entrance or inside and asked to join them on shopping trips. Heavy customer volume likely facilitated success in securing interviews. Each visit included walkabouts and/or semistructured interviews with several individuals and/or groups. Interview questions focused on age, motivations for mall visits, reasons for store selection, purchases, frequency of visits, typical shopping itineraries, and observed behaviors. The women conducted fifteen visits, each lasting approximately three hours. They spent forty-seven hours in the field, and data included thirty-one walkabouts without conversations (“shadowing”), forty-four intensive interviews, and thirty-three brief conversations. The researchers planned to conduct interviews during all of the walkabouts, but some study participants declined interview requests. We did not observe any substantial differences between customers who consented to or declined interviews. The researchers engaged in theoretical sampling across individuals, groups, activities, days, times, and locations.

All of the original data are in Spanish and the authors translated it to English. The first author is a bilingual native English speaker and has conducted qualitative field research in Chile for two decades. The second author is a bilingual Chilean native who received his MA and PhD in the United States. All team members are Chilean natives or bilingual native English speakers. We feel confident that our translations and interpretations capture the cultural and linguistic nuances present in our data.

These data do not reflect a long-term focus on and participation with a specific group because we chose to “sample for range” (Small 2009). Furthermore, given time constraints, we could not collect identical forms of data at both sites. However, since the malls are in close proximity, shoppers regularly visit both (as evident in our findings), and the data yielded similar patterns across the two sites, we analyze the malls as part of the same commercial system (Pérez 2010). Rather than produce a paired comparison, we chose to identify patterns across the two sites. Further, since we know of only two other published ethnographies of mall users in Chile (Fariás 2009; Stillerman 2006), we decided to generate data across a wide range of groups to build a foundation for future studies. We found consistent patterns across individuals, categories, and malls, and researchers cross-checked interpretations of indirect observational data.

The authors utilized open codes after an initial reading of the first data set. Further readings yielded axial codes covering broader categories. We engaged in an identical procedure with the Plaza Vespucio data, and then recoded Florida Center data in light of subsequent findings. We exchanged initial memos focused on emerging hypotheses and later wrote theoretical memos (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Both authors had conducted previous research on malls in Chile (Salcedo 2004; Stillerman 2006), and hence our knowledge of scholarship and earlier data sets informed initial hypotheses. We fostered a dialogue between theory and data rather than adopting Glaser and Strauss's (1967) model of theoretical discovery. We doubt that theoretical discovery occurs without any influence of preexisting scholarship (Snow, Morrill, and Anderson 2003). Hence, our approach entailed "retroduction" or the "double fitting of cases and concepts" (Ragin and Amoroso 2011).

## Findings

Scholars view malls as sites of seduction, control, or self-expression. We build on the latter view, emphasizing how Santiago, Chile's urban and cultural characteristics encourage mall visitors to *import* meanings and practices to malls in a process we call *transposition*. Shoppers use knowledge of different Santiago retail areas to select a specific mall or store to visit. Drawing on this knowledge and their mobility throughout the Santiago metro area, consumers attribute meaningful characteristics to malls, understanding them as *places* (Miller et al. 1998).

Shoppers also import their *relationships* into the mall. Individuals visit malls with family, friends, or romantic partners. When visiting alone, consumers often purchase gifts for others. Hence consumers *use* malls as media for enhancing personal relationships (Zelizer 2005). Malls can function as relationship spaces because consumers follow the rule of civil inattention (Goffman 1963), thereby permitting families and couples to operate "in private."

Consumers use malls for entertainment, as performance stages, and display reflexive attitudes about purchases. Some consumers' decisions not to spend money at the mall and reflexive attitudes undercut the idea that malls supply consumers with readymade meanings. These consumers generate limited profits for malls because they do not make purchases or avoid impulse buying (Fiske 1989 [2000]; Lewis 1989, 1990; Miller 1997; Ortiz 1994).

Finally, mall owners face a central contradiction. While they seek to attract crowds by generating the fiction of the mall as a public plaza, some visitors engage in informal and formal resistance to mall rules. Resistant practices may deter other shoppers or undercut mall profits. Informal resistance includes illegal

sales, eating home-packed food, youthful pranks, and other “annoyances.” Formal resistance includes panhandlers’ and thieves’ repeated visits, labor strikes, and organized protests. Mall security guards’ willingness and capacity to control customer behavior varies across sections of each mall and between the two malls. We discovered limits to mall authorities’ dominance, reflecting Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of the conflicts between abstract and social space.

### *Malls as Places*

Many of those interviewed visit numerous malls and traditional stores throughout Santiago. Shoppers develop complex mental maps of different shopping settings and use their knowledge to obtain bargains or procure specific goods. Santiago’s extensive public transit system allows upper-class residents from eastern Santiago to visit malls in mixed-income areas like La Florida and lower-income residents to go to upscale malls. These transit links and some malls’ location near residential areas (as in our study sites) facilitate cross-class encounters among consumers. In contrast, scholars claim that the clientele in U.S. suburban malls is predominantly white and middle class (Cohen 1996; Lofland 1998; Staeheli and Mitchell 2006). Upper-class Santiago residents contrast Plaza Vespucio with upscale malls, while lower income citizens compare the mall with traditional markets. As one upper-class Plaza Vespucio visitor comments:

I was looking for something specific—a jacket. I already went to Parque Arauco and Alto Las Condes [two upscale malls located in wealthy districts], but couldn’t find it, so I came here. I have been here before and know they have lots of things. I live in La Reina so it’s not so far away. (interview, 28 July 2009)

Consumers have pragmatic attitudes toward visiting a given mall and consider different sites’ characteristics (Zukin 2004). These attitudes can lead lower income and older consumers away from malls:

*A woman in her sixties bought a towel and then saw some bedspreads. “I like them but they’re just too expensive. . . . I’ll just go to Independencia [an older, poorer area of Santiago] and buy some fabric to make one myself.” (field notes, 13 August 2009)*

This woman’s decision to engage in self-provisioning (Miller 1997) illustrates competition between malls and traditional stores. This pattern contrasts

with the United States and Europe, where informal commerce declined to approximately 10 percent of all sales in the early twentieth century. In Latin America, traditional retail formats retain 40% to 60% of food and personal products sales (D'Andrea, Stenger, and Goebel-Krstelj 2004).

Consumers also attribute distinctive characteristics to different malls, as Juan revealed in the following remarks:

I came to Florida Center today because I need to buy some gifts and I like several stores here. I also like the fact that it's so spacious here. There aren't many people, so I don't have to rush to get what I want because of all the crowds like at Plaza Vespuccio. I also knew I would receive good service from store clerks since it isn't very crowded. Even though I like it here, it gets boring, I have to walk a lot, and I get tired. In that sense, Plaza Vespuccio is more fun. (interview, 22 November 2008)

This shopper contrasts each mall's features, noting that both malls have negative attributes—crowds in one and boredom in another. Shoppers' complaints regarding crowds at Plaza Vespuccio imply that they feel the crowds violate their personal space and obligate them to engage in undesired cross-class encounters (Goffman 1971).

In contrast, La Florida residents often comment that they appreciate Plaza Vespuccio's familiarity: *A twenty-one-year-old man sits with his infant child. He says, "I like Plaza Vespuccio. The other malls don't do anything for me—this one is more fun. It's the closest to my house and it's the one I know best"* (interview, 7 August 2009). The mall's proximity to home and easy-to-navigate design make it appealing (compare Fariás 2009). The notion of the mall as a familiar place illustrates Lefebvre's (1991) idea that individuals construct meaningful lived spaces by interpreting everyday routines.

Wealthy residents feel uneasy at Plaza Vespuccio: "I don't like this mall very much because the parking lot is dangerous. The *fauna* are more diverse, and it's not really a good place for an outing. I feel insecure here" (interview, 30 July 2009). Affluent customers feel uncomfortable with and harbor negative attitudes toward poor shoppers. By describing shoppers as "fauna" (a literal translation from Spanish), the interviewee symbolically dehumanizes them by comparing them to animals. However, these feelings do not deter wealthy shoppers from visiting the mall. Further, older shoppers complain about the noise, lack of adequate seating, and difficulties finding products. In contrast to the view of malls as "dream houses," we found that malls generate positive and negative emotions (Miller et al. 1998).

Consumers also use the mall as a node permitting connection to others and transit to other places, representing a subtle tactic of appropriation and transformation of the built environment (Certeau 1984). Easy pedestrian or public transit access to malls makes them less physically and psychologically removed from everyday routines than suburban U.S. malls designed for automobile access (Lofland 1998). In this context, consumers use malls as meeting places:

*A fifty-year-old man came to the mall to pay a bill at a credit agency: "I came here because it's on my way to work. . . . It's my meeting spot with my kids who live in different municipalities: one is downtown and the other is further south. It's a central spot to meet and then go out to eat. We usually go out somewhere nearby because I'd rather not eat fast food."* (interview, 7 August 2009)

Others use the mall as a shortcut: *A fifty-year-old man dressed in workman's clothes walks through the mall as a shortcut to his job. He tells me it's quicker if he walks through the mall* (field notes, 7 August 2009). These examples illustrate how Santiago residents' public transit access and malls' location in mixed-income areas facilitate cross-class encounters in malls and how users adapt shopping centers for noncommercial uses. Unlike U.S. malls, Santiago's shopping centers form part of the urban fabric.

### *The Mall as Relationship Space*

In contrast to work on the "mall as dream house" (Crawford 1992; Goss 1999; Gottdiener 1997) that imagines consumers as individual *flaneurs* aimlessly wandering through malls, most consumers we observed visited malls with family members, partners, or friends. Family members served as companions, gift recipients, and the objects of commentary. Friends and romantic partners used "tie-signs" (like an embrace) to shelter private encounters from interference (Goffman 1963, 1971). Further, individuals use the mall for "relational work": consumer goods and settings become media for affirming relationships (Zelizer 2005).

Parents and grandparents often visited malls to purchase gifts:

*A woman of about sixty joins her fifteen-year-old granddaughter and her boyfriend. The girl wants grandma to keep her company while she looks at shoes, but she declines and says she'll sit down and wait. . . . After a half hour, the grandmother goes to buy toys for her other*

grandchildren. They're all awaiting her daughter who will arrive after work to exchange some shoes. (field notes, 7 August 2009)

This excerpt reveals the omnipresence of adults' gift-buying and gift-giving, and family members' tendency to keep one another company at the mall.

Families also enact daily rituals, and parents offer children treats:

A fortyish woman brought her two kids to the mall. They made a variety of purchases and then at 4:00, we went to Happyland because they had promised the youngest child he could ride the bumper cars. . . . The girl went into the haunted house and the boy entertained himself with various games. . . . At 5:00 they went to the food court. (field notes, 15 August 2009)

Adults also discipline children at the mall:

As I was leaving the mall . . . I saw two women accompanying a young girl who had begun to cry. The mother said, "I can't buy you an ice cream cone because we spent all our money." The other woman, who appeared a little older, said, "I'll buy you one tomorrow." The girl continued to cry, but less intensely. (field notes, 1 September 2008)

Parents set limits for children, offering lessons in consumer education. Additionally, a more distant relative can indulge the child because she is not responsible for her upkeep. Finally, this conflict occurs at the mall's exit rather than its hallways, where others might consider it a violation of interaction rules protecting strangers from involvement in others' private matters (Goffman 1963).

Couples use the mall for courtship rituals:

A young couple was seated to my left. . . . He stood up behind her, hugged her, appeared to try to touch her breasts, and she covered them. He then leaned over, gave her a passionate kiss, she stood up, and they left. (field notes, 7 September 2008)

Visitors commonly identify empty or isolated spaces in the food court to use as stages for courting. They implicitly assume their "tie signs" and rules about civic inattention will limit interference from others (Goffman 1963, 1971).

We also observed friends sharing resources:

Four upper-class college students . . . stand in front of me while we wait in line for pizza. They try to figure out how much money they have. One says, “I don’t have any more change.” Realizing that Jumbo (a supermarket chain) has a store in the mall, one proposes, “let’s pool our money to buy soda,” and then they ask to cancel their drink order. Two go to the supermarket and the others wait for the pizzas. (field notes, 2 September 2008)

Pooling resources reinforces friendship bonds. These simple consumption acts facilitate valued relationship work. While these examples of relational consumption are profitable to malls and reinforce existing gender and family ideologies, they also illustrate how commodity purchases reinforce intimate ties (Zelizer 2005).

### *Shopping and Nonshopping Practices*

Critics of themed shopping center designs argue that malls seduce consumers into buying goods (Goss 1999; Gottdiener 1997; Crawford 1992). However, shoppers in these two malls often avoid making purchases. Mall officials want to attract large crowds who will buy goods, but these crowds—particularly teens and the elderly—regularly visit malls and spend little or no money (Lewis 1990; Ortiz 1994).

This finding is important because researchers perceived Florida Center as a commercial flop and Plaza Vespucio earns the highest profits of any mall in Chile. Yet in each, some shoppers refrain from purchases while others attempt to exercise self-control, demonstrating a reflexive rather than an impulsive shopping orientation.

Many “shoppers” buy little or nothing, using the setting for conversation, courting, “people watching,” or conducting errands:

A 40-year-old woman went to the supermarket to buy cookies and took her 80-year-old father along. They sat by the escalators because in the mall’s “central plaza,” children climbed onto stages donning costumes and staff photographed them. The father had a lot of fun watching them. His daughter asked if he wanted to leave, but he said, “not yet.” They stayed for another twenty minutes. (field notes, 7 August 2009)

Other elderly men complained that mall officials had removed seating, making their “outings” there uncomfortable. These efforts to deter some



customers' visits underscore mall authorities' low-level conflict with the elderly and teens (compare Lewis 1990; Ortiz 1994).

Others use the mall as a "playground," living room, or performance stage. These uses import practices and meanings from other urban settings. We frequently observed small children playing by themselves or with parents. At the Florida Center food court, children played hide-and-go-seek and ran in between tables as well as on top of a stage. In Plaza Vespucio, children enjoyed riding the escalator. Parent-child play included a father and daughter staging a mock fistfight after accidentally bumping into one another, a father chasing his son around a shoe store while his spouse shopped, and parents donning Burger King hats their children received with their meal:

A family seated at a table to my left had three Burger King crowns and two balloons. The older girl got another crown from the restaurant and tried to put it on her younger sister, a toddler . . . who cried until her older sister removed it. At various moments, the parents put on Burger King crowns to join the fun. (field notes, 30 September 2008)

The parents use the crown as a prop to identify with their children or to temporarily act like children. They implicitly endorse the Burger King brand's association with healthy family life. This parent-child play uses the mall as a backdrop for play that also occurs elsewhere.

We also observed school-age children playing board and card games in the Florida Center food court. In one case, fifteen teens pulled together several tables to exchange trading cards (field notes, 21 September and 30 September 2008). These examples underscore how shoppers transpose practices from parks and living rooms to the mall, reflecting consumer appropriation of commodities and retail settings (Certeau 1984).

These performances of "wholesome" childhood contrast with teens' ironic, sexualized performances:

I was waiting to purchase an ice cream cone and three adolescent girls in school uniforms stood beside me. . . . One received her cone while her friends waited. She pretended to lick the ice cream cone and then rolled her eyes under her eyelids offering an expression of ecstasy. Her friends laughed. (field notes, 1 September 2008)

Here, one girl uses her ice cream cone to either imitate a commercial, simulate oral sex, or both. She used the occasion to improvise a humorous and ironic performance that challenges adults' notions of sexual propriety.

Additionally, we often observed individuals in the food courts reviewing balance sheets, working on laptop computers, or balancing checkbooks. Here, a small food purchase becomes an “excuse” permitting mall entry. Further, “workers” used props to claim territory and deter “intrusions” (Goffman 1971). One group held a training session at the mall:

Seven men and one woman appear to be holding an office meeting in the food court. . . . The man at the head of the table is the supervisor and the others are employees; the woman is a secretary or subordinate. . . . The boss periodically repeats, raising his voice: “respect” and “dignity.” I infer the supervisor is providing the employees with some sort of training and has purchased pizza and ice cream for them since leftovers are on the table. (field notes, 2 September 2008)

Another interviewee commented she visited Plaza Vespucio with her son while her husband conducted a business meeting there, a frequent activity for him (field notes, 4 August 2009).

Some consumers who do make purchases at the mall seek to control expenses and desires by configuring the timing of shopping. Several interviewees described themselves as “compulsive shoppers” and thus tried to avoid window shopping: *A young man visits his girlfriend, a mall employee. I ask if he ever window shops while visiting her. He says, “When I have money, I look around; but otherwise, what’s the point?”* (interview, 7 August 2009). Another woman uses a similar logic to rationalize the opposite behavior:

*I meet a 55-year-old woman in a restaurant just outside the mall. She says, “I’m addicted to the mall. I come here three to four times a week for a few hours. . . . I love coming here because it’s fun and I always find cheap things. . . . I usually see what I like and wait until the price drops.”* (interview, 24 July 2009)

This long time horizon contrasts with instrumental shoppers seeking a specific article. A 45-year-old man purchasing books for his son, comments,

I only come to the mall when I want to buy something. I know which stores I like; and when I need pants or shoes, I go to those stores. . . . I hate window shopping and going around in circles browsing. (interview, 23 July 2009)

Others spend hours searching for a single item and leave the mall empty-handed. Still others browse aimlessly and make several purchases on the spot. Finally, some go to the mall on an errand like buying medicine, paying bills, or purchasing a single item.

These examples indicate that many shoppers adopt a reflexive stance toward shopping, developing strategies to curtail impulse purchases. Many shoppers seek specific stores and items rather than the mall itself. In contrast, nonbuyers and impulse shoppers do see mall visits as a source of entertainment as well as a stage for play and performance. These accounts compel us to develop a more complex portrait of shoppers' motivations for mall visits. While small restaurant purchases and shoppers' use of self-control to purchase goods as needed ultimately benefit malls, we need to understand shoppers' motivations and strategies to avoid reaching the erroneous conclusion that shoppers unconsciously fulfill firms' profit-making goals.

### *Informal and Formal Resistance*

Scholars who focus on malls' attractive designs implicitly argue that since malls satisfy consumers' desires, shoppers have no reason to resist mall authorities (Crawford 1992; Gottdiener 1997). Similarly, authors who emphasize malls' control over populations and behaviors argue that shopping center authorities have eliminated customers' resistance (Lofland 1998; Staeheli and Mitchell 2006). Yet mall authorities face a fundamental problem because the populations that spend the least money and the most time there—the elderly and teens—form strong community bonds *in the mall*. While reluctant to exclude the elderly, mall authorities play a “cat and mouse game” with teens: they ask them to move on or leave, but youth simply move to another part of the mall. Further, those barred from malls return in disguise, deceiving security guards (Matthews et al. 2000; Lewis 1989, 1990; Ortiz 1994).

We observed informal and formal resistance (strikes and protests) at both malls. Our findings underscore Lefebvre's (1991) argument that business and government efforts to *control* space invariably provoke a response from users who seek to defend settings they inhabit. One type of informal resistance involves disobeying mall rules without intentionally provoking authorities. Santiago includes numerous street markets (Contreras and Weihert 1988; Salazar 2003). It is thus surprising to encounter itinerant vendors in a mall:

A young woman approximately eighteen years old walks between the tables and takes some containers of lip gloss out of a white plastic bag. She leaves three or four on the tables, reaching about six tables at a

time. Then, she returns and asks if people want to buy them. (field notes, 2 September 2008)

In Santiago, vendors frequently approach patrons of sidewalk cafés or bus passengers, but rarely do so inside malls. The vendor's presence, in addition to violating mall policies, transposes street practices to the mall.

At the Florida Center food court, we often observed mall department store employees and customers eating home-packed or store-bought lunches, flouting visible signs prohibiting this practice:

I see a poor school-aged couple. They carry a bag of food purchased at Jumbo [a grocery chain]. . . . They share their food while kissing and hugging. . . . I see they are only eating bread with mayonnaise! (field notes, 30 September 2008)

Consumers “domesticate” the mall space by having a “picnic” there. The de-commodification of food items (Arnould and Wallendorf 1994) contradicts the setting's official purpose: commodity sales. We also observed a young man riding a skateboard in the food court, violating mall rules while importing practices from streets and parks (field notes, 30 September 2008).

In a second type of informal resistance, youths deliberately mock mall authorities or “make a scene” to attract attention. On one occasion, two youths wearing reggae-style hats who had skipped school lifted a sign stolen from the subway and stuck it on one of Florida Center's food court tables. On another day, a youth climbed up a decorative fountain located just outside the mall's entrance. He came down after guards called out to him, earning his friends' laughter. One evening, youths in the food court got drunk with store-bought beer, violating food court rules and drawing others' attention by laughing and yelling. However, security guards barely noticed them. (field notes, 2, 9, and 20 September and 4 October 2008).

A Plaza Vespucio guard described similar conflicts: *I was observing teens kissing and taking pictures of one another for about one-half hour and asked the guard why they had removed all of the benches. He replied, “because lots of people came and didn't even buy anything. Even poor people would hang out here. Teens would come here to skip school”* (field notes, 29 August 2009). Mall officials deliberately reduced seating to discourage teens from congregating in the new upscale “Aires” wing, but teens continued to hang out there. Elderly patrons also complained that managers had removed seating elsewhere. These policies demonstrate that authorities have failed to persuade “nonshoppers” to leave.

We also observed formal resistance at Florida Center. In a legal strike, picketers from a café occupied half the restaurant's seating, something inconceivable in U.S. malls (Cohen 1996; Lofland 1998; Staeheli and Mitchell 2006). In May 2009, fifteen guards subcontracted by Plaza Vespucio brutally beat a panhandler in the outdoor food court. An observer filmed the incident and the mall fired the perpetrators (La Nación 2009). Theater students and poor residents also staged a protest in the food court supporting indigenous peoples' activism (Radio Bío Bío 2009). Finally, workers in the mall's clinic staged a one-day strike at its front door, quickly reaching an agreement with management (El Paradiario 14: 2010).

Those involved in informal resistance by disobeying mall rules import practices from outside the mall. In contrast, deliberate efforts to provoke mall authorities violate interaction rules to make a statement about adult authority and serve as subtle tactics of informal resistance (Certeau 1984; Goffman 1963). Plaza Vespucio generates more intense conflicts between mall authorities, youth, and panhandlers. This phenomenon likely results from the customer flow and the mall's location next to sidewalks and near a low-income residential area. Further, workers' ability to exercise their right to free assembly in malls (unlike the United States) opens the door to organized protests and strikes that may undermine malls' profits.

This pattern illustrates Lefebvre's (1991) argument that the advance of abstract space generates protests from users. The harsh labor practices of a restaurant and health clinic evoke mall workers' responses. Further, aggressive retail development in mixed-income communities generates conflicts with panhandlers (Stillerman 2006). Finally, each mall undercuts the assumption that shopping centers neutralize users' ability to question authorities and that mall officials can completely remove undesired populations and behaviors.

## **Conclusion**

Scholarship on malls initially focused on their entertaining designs and role in promoting social segregation. These works did not detect the gap between mall authorities' goals and consumers' interpretations and uses of malls. Ethnographic scholarship has broadened our understanding of malls as dynamic social settings that consumers actively shape.

We have extended these insights by arguing that specific urban environments affect how consumers use and understand malls. Santiago's extensive public transit system and distinctive pattern of socioeconomic segregation permit malls' close integration with pedestrian and city life in contrast to the suburban U.S. mall. The porous boundaries between malls and the

surrounding city encourage consumers to transpose routines, relationships, and interaction rules (Goffman 1963, 1971) from streets, parks, homes, and offices to the mall.

Cross-class encounters commonly occur in malls, as users travel throughout the metro area in search of specific goods or bargains. Consumers contrast different malls and compare them to street markets. Further, consumers creatively adapt mall buildings for noncommercial uses, such as using them as meeting spots or pedestrian shortcuts (Certeau 1984). Consumers use the mall to express and enrich family, friendship, and romantic ties (Zelizer 2005) based on the assumption that others will respect their privacy in public settings. Mall visits do not necessarily include purchases, as many consumers seek entertainment in the mall and adopt a reflexive stance toward purchases.

Ironically, two groups that find malls particularly attractive—teens and the elderly—spend little money there (Lewis 1989; Matthews et al 2000; Ortiz 1994). Additionally, some mall visitors silently disobey mall authorities by holding picnics, engaging in drinking bouts, and conducting itinerant sales. Because organized protests inside malls are legal in Chile, we observed and documented strikes and protests there. The advance of abstract space necessarily provokes a defensive response from urban inhabitants (Lefebvre 1991). Locating a mall in a mixed-income community will likely generate conflicts with panhandlers and alleged thieves. Malls are also workplaces, and hence work-based conflicts are possible there.

Although we collected data from two shopping centers, we anticipate that our results apply to other (though not all) malls in Santiago and elsewhere in Latin America. We emphasized malls' easy pedestrian and public transit access and proximity to mixed-income neighborhoods and street markets. Studies of São Paulo, Brazil (Caldeira 2000), and Quito, Ecuador (Bromley 1998), also note malls' proximity to poor neighborhoods and street markets, and hence our findings reflect the broader Latin American context.

In another study (Stillerman 2006), the first author found similar patterns of transposition and cross-class encounters in Plaza Oeste (owned by the same firm as Plaza Vespucio). That mall is located further west on Américo Vespucio, is accessible via public buses, and is near public housing. The mall is not located near a light rail stop or a major crossroads, and lacks easy pedestrian access, yet it demonstrates similar patterns of customer use. We anticipate similar results in downtown malls with high-density pedestrian use and easy public transit access.

We expect that more limited cross-class encounters and patterns of transposition occur in upscale malls located in wealthy districts of eastern Santiago.

The number of autos in Santiago increased 15% from 2001 to 2005 and 25% between 2005 and 2010, with a total of 1.39 million cars in a metro area of 6.7 million inhabitants in 2010 (INE 2011). As Trumper and Tomic (2009) argue, increased car ownership and use on toll roads surrounding the metropolitan area reflects class inequalities in transit access. Plaza Vespucio is adjacent to one such toll road. We anticipate that lower income individuals would have difficulty accessing upper income malls because they may not own cars or would lack funds to pay highway tolls. Yet public buses stop at these malls. In fact, one of our interviewees resides in La Florida and visits local malls but works as a parking attendant in an upscale mall. We suspect that most lower income shoppers at upscale malls work there because they have more limited public transit access and the malls are far from poor communities. Further, poor residents might avoid these malls fearing they would feel out of place there or that wealthier customers might humiliate them. Hence, we expect that many, though not all, Santiago malls will reflect our findings.

Our findings also pose theoretical, comparative, and methodological lessons for future research. While researchers in the United States and Europe focus on isolated suburban shopping centers, our research in a city of the Global South shows how specific patterns of urbanization, land use, and transit planning produce distinctive relationships between malls, users, and the city. The generalization about the isolated mall is likely an artifact of the post–World War II U.S. suburb. Ironically, U.S. consumers have recently turned away from the enclosed mall and hence developers have opened malls via outdoor boulevards (Berger 2005).

Skeptical readers might ask if this analysis fundamentally changes our understanding of malls because, after all, the malls we studied still make profits, notwithstanding minor annoyances. However, we do not claim that our findings represent the shopping mall's apotheosis. Rather, some scholars have imputed attitudes to mall users without providing supporting evidence. Our research shows that consumers adroitly utilize malls to achieve their goals. Some of these practices generate profits, but others challenge mall administrators' control of these settings. Malls are permeable, diverse, and unpredictable social settings rather than engineered stage sets.

Our findings may help understand the future of U.S. inner ring suburbs. With the suburbanization of Asian and Hispanic immigrants, malls will likely become more ethnically and socioeconomically diverse and entrepreneurs will build malls targeting immigrants. Further, in recent decades, gentrification displaced low-income urban minorities to inner-ring suburbs, transforming the postwar white, middle-class suburb. The cross-class encounters we observed in Santiago may become the norm in changing U.S. suburbs (Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2004).

Further, the fact that one of the malls we studied was a commercial flop leads us to challenge the notion that malls experience unbridled success because they have seduced consumers. In the United States, as inner-ring suburbs experience economic decline, consumers may convert the “abstract space” of bankrupt malls into the “social space” of community centers (Parlette and Cowen 2011).

The process of transposition we discovered merits further empirical and conceptual exploration. Will patterns of transposition in Santiago translate to other Latin American cities? Will the juxtaposition of street markets and malls in Cairo (Abaza 2001), Mumbai (Anjaria 2008), and other cities in the Global South generate similar patterns of transposition given their distinct cultures and histories? Do low-income and immigrant residents in the United States and Europe transpose practices from flea markets or immigrant stores to malls? Future studies must carefully analyze how urban environments and cultures shape malls and how consumers critically interpret the dreamscapes malls hope to sell them.

### **Acknowledgment**

The authors wish to thank Gonzalo Cáceres Quiero, Justine Graham, Liliana De Simone, Jordan Harris, Miguel Pérez, Sofía Covarrubias, and Gail Phillips for gathering portions of the data used here. Rachel Campbell, Jeffrey Rothstein, Laurel Westbrook, several anonymous reviewers, and *JCE* editor Kent Sandstrom provided helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Funding**

The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: The research in this article was sponsored by a three year(2008-2010) grant from the Chilean Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT), grant number 1085276. Rodrigo Salcedo was principal investigator and Joel Stillerman was co-investigator under the grant.

### **Note**

1. Ironically, Gottdiener (1993, 1997, 2003) draws on Lefebvre’s discussion of real estate investment (the “second circuit of capital”) but barely acknowledges that author’s claim that abstract space’s incursions into everyday life incite residents’ protests.



## References

- Abaza, Mona. 2001. Shopping malls, consumer culture, and the reshaping of public space in Egypt. *Theory, Culture & Society* 18:97-122.
- Anjaria, Jonathan S. 2008. The mall and the street: Practices of public consumption in Mumbai. In *Lived experiences of public consumption: Encounters with value in marketplaces on five continents*, edited by D. T. Cook, 203-20. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave.
- Arnould, Eric, and Melanie Wallendorf. 1994. Market-oriented ethnography: Interpretation building and marketing strategy formulation. *JMR: Journal of Marketing Research* 31:484-505.
- Baldauf, Anette. 2008. "They come and they are happy." A gender topography of consumer space in Dubai. In *Lived experiences of public consumption: Encounters with value in marketplaces on five continents*, edited by D. T. Cook, 221-40. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave.
- Berger, Arthur A. 2005. *Shop 'til you drop: Consumer behavior and American culture*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bermúdez, Emilia. 2003. "Malls," consumo cultural y representaciones de identidad juvenil en Maracaibo. In *Políticas de identidades y diferencias sociales en tiempos de globalización*, edited by D. Mato, 173-92. Caracas: FACES-UCV.
- Bermúdez, Emilia. 2008. Malls: territorios y objetos de consumo simbólico en la construcción de representaciones de identidades juveniles. *Revista Argentina de Sociología* 6:96-120.
- Bromley, Rosemary D. F. 1998. Market-place trading and the transformation of retail space in the expanding Latin American city. *Urban Studies* 35:1311-33.
- Cáceres, Gonzalo, and Lorena Fariás. 1999. Efectos de las grandes superficies comerciales en el Santiago de la modernización ininterrumpida, 1982-1999. *Ambiente y Desarrollo* 15:36-41.
- Caldeira, Teresa. 2000. *City of walls: Crime, segregation, and citizenship in São Paulo*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Certeau, Michel De. 1984. *The practice of everyday life*, translated by S. Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cohen, Elizabeth. 1996. From town center to shopping center: The reconfiguration of community marketplaces in postwar America. *American Historical Review* 101:1050-81.
- Constable, Pamela, and Arturo Valenzuela. 1991. *A nation of enemies: Chile under Pinochet*. New York: Norton.
- Contreras, Victoria, and Uwe Weihert. 1988. *Sobrevivir en la calle: el comercio ambulante en Santiago*. Santiago, Chile: PREALC.
- Cox, Paulo, Eric Parrado, and Jaime Ruiz-Tagle. 2006. The distribution of assets, debt and income among Chilean households. Banco Central de Chile, Documentos de

- Trabajo No. 388 (Santiago, Chile). <http://www.bcentral.cl/estudios/documentos-trabajo/pdf/dtbc388.pdf> (accessed 14 October 2008).
- Crawford, Margaret. 1992. The world in a shopping mall. In *Variations on a theme park: The new American city and the end of public space*, edited by M. Sorkin, 3-30. New York: Hill and Wang.
- D'Andrea, Guillermo, E. Alejandro Stenger, and Anne Goebel-Krstelj. 2004. Six truths about emerging market consumers. *Strategy + Business* 34:2-12.
- Dreier, Peter, John Mollenkopf, and Todd Swanstrom. 2004. *Place matters: Metropolitica for the twenty-first century*, 2nd rev. ed. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
- El Paradiario 14. 2010. 280 trabajadores de la Clínica Vespucio protestan por reajustes de salario que sólo alcanzarían los 900 pesos. *El Paradiario* 14 (15 July). <http://www.elparadiario14.cl/admin/render/noticia/20367> (accessed 5 December 2010).
- Fariás, Ignacio. 2009. Intimidación cultural en espacios de consumo. El Plaza Vespucio y la imposibilidad de una cultura pública. In *SCL: Espacios, prácticas y cultura urbana*, edited by M. Tironi and F. Pérez, 16-29. Santiago, Chile: Ediciones Arq, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.
- Fiske, John 1989 [2000]. Shopping for pleasure: Malls, power, and resistance. In *The consumer society reader*, edited by J. B. Schor and D. B. Holt, 306-30. New York: The Free Press.
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm Strauss. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Goffman, Erving. 1963. *Behavior in public places*. New York: The Free Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1971. *Relations in Public: Microstudies in the public order*. New York: Harper.
- Goss, Jon. 1999. Once upon a time in the commodity world: An unofficial guide to mall of America. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89:45-75.
- Gottdiener, Mark. 1993. A Marx for our time: Henri Lefebvre and the production of space. *Sociological Theory* 11:129-34.
- Gottdiener, Mark. 1997. *The theming of America: Dreams, visions, and commercial spaces*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Gottdiener, Mark. 2003. Recapturing the center: a sociosemiotic analysis of shopping malls. In *Designing cities: Critical readings in urban design*, edited by A. R. Cuthbert, 128-136. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Haytko, Diana L., and Julie Baker. 2004. It's all at the mall: Exploring adolescent girls' experiences. *Journal of Retailing* 80:67-83.
- Houssay-Hozschuch, Myriam and Annika Teppo. 2009. A mall for all? Race and public space in post-apartheid Cape Town. *Cultural Geographies* 16:351-79.
- INE. 2011. Anuario parque de vehículos en circulación. [http://www.ine.cl/canales/chile\\_estadistico/estadisticas\\_economicas/transporte\\_y\\_comunicaciones/parquevehiculos.php](http://www.ine.cl/canales/chile_estadistico/estadisticas_economicas/transporte_y_comunicaciones/parquevehiculos.php) (accessed 11 November 2011).

- La Nación. 2009. Despiden a guardias que golpearon a mendigo en mall. *La Nación*, 20 May 2009. [http://www.lanacion.cl/prontus\\_noticias\\_v2/site/artic/20090520/pags/20090520154246.html](http://www.lanacion.cl/prontus_noticias_v2/site/artic/20090520/pags/20090520154246.html) (accessed 5 December 2010).
- Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The production of space*, translated by D. Nicholson-Smith. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Lewis, George H. 1989. Rats and bunnies: Core kids in an American mall. *Adolescence* 24:881-89.
- Lewis, George H. 1990. Community through exclusion and illusion: The creation of social worlds in an American shopping mall. *Journal of Popular Culture* 24:121-36.
- Lofland, Lyn. 1998. *The public realm: Exploring the city's quintessential social territory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Manzo, John. 2005. Social control and management of "personal" space in shopping centers. *Space & Culture* 8:83-97.
- Martínez, Javier and Álvaro Díaz. 1996. *Chile: The great transformation*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Matthews, Hugh, Mark Taylor, Barry Percy-Smith, and Melanie Limb. 2000. The unacceptable flaneur: The shopping mall as a teenage hangout. *Childhood* 7:279-94.
- Miller, Daniel. 1997. *Capitalism: An ethnographic approach*. New York: Berg.
- Miller, Daniel, Peter Jackson, Nigel Thrift, Beverley Holbrook, and Michael Rowlands. 1998. *Shopping, place and identity*. London: Routledge.
- Moulian, Tomás. 1998. *El consumo me consume*. Santiago, Chile: LOM.
- Nicholls, J. A. F., Fuan Li, Tomislav Mandokovic, Sydney Roslow, and Carl J. Kranendonk. 2000. US-Chilean mirrors: Shoppers in two countries. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 17:106-19.
- Ortiz, Steven M. 1994. Shopping for sociability in the mall. *Research in Community Sociology Supplement* 1:183-99.
- Parlette, Vanessa, and Deborah Cowen. 2011. Dead malls: Suburban activism, local spaces, and global logistics. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35:1-17.
- Pérez, Miguel. 2010. Cuando los indeseables se congregan en el mall: Prácticas sociales adolescentes en un espacio semi-público. MA thesis. Urban Studies. Santiago, Chile: Catholic University of Chile.
- PNUD. 2002. *Nosotros, los chilenos: Un desafío cultural*. Santiago, Chile: PNUD.
- PNUD. 2011. Datos de Chile. <http://www.pnud.cl/datoschile/1.asp> (accessed 11 November 2011).
- Portes, Alejandro, and Kelly Hoffman. 2003. Latin American class structures: Their composition and change during the neoliberal era. *Latin American Research Review* 38:41-82.

- Radio Bío Bío. 2009. Estudiantes de teatro y pobladores protestan en Plaza Vespucio por violencia contra niños mapuche. *Radio Bio Bio*, 21 December. <http://www.radiobiobio.cl/2009/12/21/estudiantes-de-teatro-y-pobladores-protestan-en-mall-plaza-vespucio-por-violencia-contra-ninos-mapuche/> (accessed 5 December 2010).
- Ragin, Charles, and Lisa M. Amoroso. 2011. *Constructing social research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge.
- Ritzer, George. 2003. Islands of the living dead: The social geography of McDonalization. *American Behavioral Scientist* 47:119-36.
- Sabatini, Francisco, and Federico Arenas. 2000. Entre el Estado y el mercado: resonancias geográficas y sustentabilidad social en Santiago de Chile. *EURE* 26:95-113.
- Salazar, Gabriel. 2003. *Ferías libres: espacio residual de soberanía ciudadana*. Santiago, Chile: SUR.
- Salcedo, Rodrigo. 2003. When the global meets the local at the mall. *American Behavioral Scientist* 46:1084-1103.
- Salcedo, Rodrigo. 2004. Towards a reconceptualization of post-public spaces. PhD diss., Political Science. Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago.
- Small, Mario L. 2009. "How many cases do I need?" On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research. *Ethnography* 10:5-38.
- Snow, David A., Calvin Morrill, and Leon Anderson. 2003. Elaborating analytic ethnography: Linking fieldwork and theory. *Ethnography* 4:181-200.
- Staheli, Lynn A., and Don Mitchell. 2006. USA's destiny? Regulating space and creating community in American shopping malls. *Urban Studies* 43:977-92.
- Stillerman, Joel. 2006. Private, parochial, and public realms in Santiago, Chile's retail areas. *City & Community* 5:293-317.
- Tironi, Eugenio. 1999. *La irrupción de las masas y el malestar de las elites: Chile en el cambio de siglo*. Santiago, Chile: Editorial Grijalbo.
- Trumper, Ricardo, and Patricia Tomic. 2009. The Chilean way to modernity: Private roads, fast cars, and neoliberal bodies. In *Car troubles: Critical studies of auto-mobility and auto-mobility*, edited by J. Conley and A. Tigar Maclaren, 165-80. Surrey, UK: Ashgate.
- Van Bavel, René, and Lucía Sell-Trujillo. 2003. Understandings of consumerism in Chile. *Journal of Consumer Culture* 3:343-62.
- Zelizer, Viviana. 2005. Culture and consumption. In *Handbook of economic sociology*, 2nd edition, edited by N. Smelser and R. Swedberg, 331-354. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, and New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Zukin, Sharon. 2004. *Point of purchase: How shopping changed American culture*. New York: Routledge.

**Bios**

**Joel Stillerman** is Associate Professor of Sociology at Grand Valley State University. His work on labor protest, consumer culture, the informal economy, and middle classes in Chile as well as transnational labor activism in North America appears in *Political Power and Social Theory*, *Qualitative Sociology*, *City & Community*, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *Mobilization*, *International Labor and Working-Class History*, *Social Science History*, and several edited volumes.

**Rodrigo Salcedo** is Dean of the College of Social and Economic Sciences at the Catholic University of Maule, Talca, Chile. His work on public space, housing, shopping, and urban poverty in Chile appears in *American Behavioral Scientist*, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *Housing Policy Debate*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *EURE*, *ARQ*, and several edited volumes.