**Brandon Marc Finn**

Dana Building, Ann Arbor, MI, 48103

**Tel:** +1 (857) 204-7952; **Email:** brafinn@umich.edu

**Website:** [Google Scholar Page](https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=Mm9pfSIAAAAJ&hl=en); [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/brandonmarcfinn/)

**AREAS OF RESEARCH/TEACHING:**

African urbanization; post-conflict development; urban poverty; informal settlements; political mobilization; labor; informality; democratic governance; youth employment; ethnography and history, climate change and urbanization

**ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS:**

**Postdoctoral Research Fellow and Lecturer** 2022-present

School for Environment and Sustainability

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, Michigan

**EDUCATION:**

**PhD, Urban Planning** 2016 – 2022

Graduate School of Design

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

* Dissertation: ‘Rethinking African Urbanization: The Global Lineages of Informality and Spatial Transformation Across the Continent’
* Committee: Dr Neil Brenner (chair), Dr Jean Comaroff, Dr Sven Beckert, Dr Diane Davis

**MSc, Urban Studies** 2015 – 2016

Department of Urban Studies

University College London, UK

* Dissertation: “Quietly chasing Kigali: young men and the intolerance of informality in Rwanda’s capital city”
* Advisor: Dr Tatiana Thieme

**BSocSci (Hons)** 2014

Environmental and Geographical Science

University of Cape Town, South Africa

* Dissertation: “Straining and innovating: young men working through waithood in Freetown, Sierra Leone”
* Advisor: Dr Sophie Oldfield

**Bachelor of Arts** 2010 – 2013

Environmental and Geographical Studies; Media and Writing

University of Cape Town

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**Staff and Writer** 2019 – 2021 African Studies Center University of Michigan

**Research Consultant** 2014 – 2015

African Centre for Cities – focusing on urban infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa

University of Cape Town

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS (n=7):**

1. **Finn, B**. (In Press) Pandemic Urbanization: How South Africa’s History of Labor and Disease Control Creates its Current disparities. *Journal of Urban Affairs.*
2. **Finn, B**., Cobbinah, P., (2022)African Urbanization at the Confluence of Informality and Climate Change. *Urban Studies*.
3. **Finn, B**. (2021) The Popular Sovereignty Continuum: Civil and Political Society in Contemporary South Africa. *Politics and Space*, 39 (1), 152-167.
4. **Finn, B**., Kobayashi, L., (2020) Structural inequality in the time of COVID-19: Urbanization, segregation, and pandemic control in sub-Saharan Africa. *Dialogues in Human Geography,* 10 (2), 217-220.
5. Finlay, J., **Finn, B**. (2020) Geography’s blind spot: the age-old urban question. *Urban Geography*, 42 (8), 1061-1078.
6. **Finn, B**. (2018) Quietly Chasing Kigali: young men and the intolerance of informality in Rwanda’s capital city. *Urban Forum*, 29 (2), 205-218.
7. **Finn, B**., Oldfield S. (2015) Straining: Young Men Working through Waithood in Freetown, Sierra Leone. *Africa Spectrum*, 50 (3), 49-69.

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS (UNDER REVIEW, n=5):**

1. **Finn, B.** Lubumbashi: Global City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*
2. **Finn, B.** The Structure of Informality: The Zambian Copperbelt and the Informal/Formal Dialectic. *Dialogues in Human Geography.*
3. Hosseini, A., **Finn, B**., Momeni, A. The complexities of urban informality: A multi-dimensional analysis of residents’ perceptions of life, inequality, and access in an informal settlement. *Cities* (under review, second revision)
4. Cobbinah, P., **Finn, B**.Planning and Climate Change in African Cities: Informal Urbanization and ‘Just’ Urban Transformations. *Journal of Planning Literature* (under review, first revision)
5. Hosseini, A., **Finn, B**., Sajjadi, S., Mosavei, T., Assessing Disparities in Quality of Life Measures Among Refugees Living in Mashhad’s Informal Settlements. *Journal of Urban Health* (under review, first revision)

**REPORTS:**

1. African Centre for Cities. (2015) *Urban infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa: harnessing land values, housing and transport. Cape Town*. African Centre for Cities. <http://www.africancentreforcities.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Full-DFID-Report_Web.1.1.pdf>

**AWARDS:**

Dissertation Completion Fellowship 2021 – 2022 Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University

GSD Real Estate Grant 2021 – 2022 Graduate School of Design, Harvard University

AAG Dissertation Research Grant 2021

American Association of Geographers

IJURR PhD Studentship 2020 – 2021

International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

Carter Manny Award 2020 – 2021

Citation of Special Recognition

The Graham Foundation

Sinclair Kennedy Fellowship 2020 – 2021

Alternate

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University

Mid-Dissertation Grant 2020

Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University

Professional Development Fund 2019

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University

Pre-Dissertation Award 2018 – 2019

Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University

Distinguished African Student Fellowship 2016 – 2018

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University

Kathryn Davis Fellowship for Peace 2017

Middlebury College

Laurie Dippenaar Scholarship 2015 – 2016

FirstRand Foundation

Oppenheimer Scholarship 2015 – 2016

Oppenheimer Foundation

Abe Bailey Scholarship for South African Students 2015 – 2016

Goodenough College

Winner of the Global Development Network Essay Competition 2014

Essay titled: “Urban Africa in 2025”

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

**Instructor** Spring 2019

Commodities, Cities, and States in Global Perspective

Special Concentration, Harvard College

**Teaching Fellow**

Histories of Landscape Architecture II (HIS 4142) Spring 2021

Histories of Landscape Architecture (HIS 4141)Fall 2020

Theories and Practices of Landscape Architecture (DES 3242) Spring 2019

History and Theory of Urban Interventions (HIS 4115) Fall 2018

Graduate School of Design

Harvard University

Geographic Thought (EGS 3022S) Spring 2014

Contemporary Urban Challenges in the Southern African City (EGS 2014S) Fall 2014

Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences

University of Cape Town

**Guest Lectures**

*Climate Change and Informal Urbanization*  Spring 2021

Urban Environmental Policy and Planning

The University of Melbourne

*‘Race’ and Class in South Africa: The Evolution of the Urban* Fall 2020 Histories of Landscape Architecture (HIS 4141) Harvard University

*Urban Decentralization, Land Use, and Spatial Inequality*  Spring 2020

Land Use Planning (URP 610)

University of Michigan

*Informal Labor and Extractive African Urbanization*  Spring 2019

The Nature of Difference: Theories and Practices of Landscape Architecture (DES 3242)

Harvard University

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:**

1. *Urbanism Interrupted: Informal Economy, National Reconstruction and Luanda’s Urban Morphology*. Invited Discussant. African Studies Workshop. Harvard University, Virtual due to COVID-19, 8 November 2021.
2. *Pandemic Urbanization: ‘Race,’ Class, and South African Spatial Transformation.* American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Virtual due to COVID-19, 9 April 2021.
3. *Countering Narratives.* Invited Discussant.International Institute Conference on Migration. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 24 February 2020.
4. *Resource Cities in the Copperbelt and the Making of the Electric, Uranium, and Digital Ages*. Frontiers of Accumulation – International Conference. University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark, 13–14 May 2019.
5. *Extractive African Urbanization: Copperbelt Cities and Informal Mining in Global Perspective*. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, USA, 3–7 April 2019.
6. *Extractive Urbanization and Global Urban Change*. Cambridge Talks: PhD Colloquium. Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, MA, USA, 31 March 2019.
7. *Lubumbashi: Global City*. Colonial Cities in Global Perspective. Global History Network Annual Meeting, St Louis, Senegal, 7–9 December 2018.
8. *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory.* Invited Discussant. Program on the Study of Capitalism. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA, 26 February 2018.
9. *Quietly Chasing Kigali: Young Men and the Intolerance of Informality in Rwanda’s Capital City*. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, USA, 5–9 April 2017.
10. *The Africa Land and Infrastructure City Scan: A Profile of 31 Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Urban Infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa, Department of International Development, Cape Town, South Africa, 20 July 2015.
11. *Straining and Innovating: Young Men at Work in Freetown, Sierra Leone*. Urban Geography Commission, Dublin, Ireland, 9–16 August 2015.

**WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS:**

1. *Contested Continuums: Civil and Political Society in Contemporary South Africa*. Urban Theory Lab, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, MA, USA, 7 November 2018.
2. *Urban Planning and Informality in Kigali, Rwanda*. Urban Theory Lab, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, MA, USA, 12 October 2017.

**NON-PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS:**

1. Finn, B., Cobbinah, P., (2022) Climate change and informality as defining features of African urbanization. *Urban Studies Blog.* 27 June 2022. <https://www.urbanstudiesonline.com/resources/resource/climate-change-and-informality-as-defining-features-of-african-urbanisation/>
2. Finn, B. (2017) *A New Middle Ground: Rethinking Formalisation in Cities*. Emerge85. 5 July 2017. https://emerge85.io/Insights/a-new-middle-ground-rethinking-formalisation-in-cities/
3. Finn, B. (2017) *How Anti-Urban Bias Fuels Informal Settlements and Poverty*. Emerge85. 17 August 2017. https://emerge85.io/Insights/how-anti-urban-bias-fuels-informal-settlements-and-poverty/
4. Finn, B. (2017) *Rwandan Government tightens its oppressive reigns*. Daily Maverick. 27 January 2017. https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-01-27-op-ed-rwandan-government-tightens-its-oppressive-reins/
5. Finn, B. (2017) *Activism and Rwanda’s Development Model*. Daily Maverick. 27 April 2017. https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-04-27-op-ed-activism-and-rwandas-development-model-diane-rwigara-takes-a-stand/
6. Finn, B. (2014) *The Sand Miners of Sierra Leone: Working and Waiting*. UrbanAfrica. 14 August 2014. https://www.urbanafrica.net/urban-voices/sand-miners-sierra-leone-working-waiting/
7. Finn, B. (2014) *Young men struggling for work in Freetown*. UrbanAfrica. 23 July 2014. https://www.urbanafrica.net/urban-voices/young-men-caught-rock-hard-place-freetown

**SERVICE TO PROFESSION:**

**Ad Hoc Peer Reviewer:**

*Africa Development*

*African Identities*

*Africa Studies Review*

*Cambridge University Press*

*Cities*

*Development Policy Review*

*Geography Compass*

*International Development Planning Review*

*International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*

*Human Geography*

*Journal of Urban Affairs*

*Swiss National Science Foundation*

*Territory, Politics, Governance*

**External Reviewer for African Cities Lab** **Grant** 2021

African Cities Lab

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology

**External Reviewer for MSc Dissertation Projects** (7 reviews) 2018 – 2020

Graduate School of Design

Harvard University

**External Reviewer for Undergraduate Senior Thesis** 2020

Special Concentrations

Harvard College

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP:**

American Association of Geographers 2016 – Present

**PROFESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS:**

**Member**, Urban Sustainability Research Group, University of Michigan 2022-present

The Urban Sustainability Research Group at the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan aims to foster urban sustainability and resilience, mitigate climate change, and address global ecological crises.

**Member**, Urban Theory Lab, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University 2017 – 2022

The Urban Theory Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Design is the base for an international network of researchers, promoting theory-driven research on historical and contemporary definitions, effects, and urbanization processes across multiple scales.

**Affiliate**, Center for Political Studies, U-M Institute for Social Research 2019 – 2021

The Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan forms part of the Institute for Social Research, and conducts broad, interdisciplinary research on politics and geopolitics.

**Affiliate**, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University 2018 – 2021

The Weatherhead Center for International Affairs facilitates the production of pathbreaking social science research on international, comparative, transnational, and global issues by faculty and students at Harvard.