

Anthropology 3500
CULTURE AND THE CITY
Fall 2018
TF 10:00-11:50

Instructor: Prof. Dean J. Saitta
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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00-1:00; also by appointment.
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Course Objectives

Cities, in the opinion of geographer David Lowenthal, have long been viewed through “the opposing lenses of redemption and corruption.” On the one hand, they are presented as the greatest cultural achievement of humankind, the “locus of justice, truth, and progress, the source of civic freedom.” On the other hand, they are seen as “seats of tyranny and corruption, sources of impurity and subversion, their populace alien, their pursuits parasitical.”

History seems to be settling this issue in favor of the more positive view of the city. Today, for the first time in history, most human beings on the planet live in cities...and the trend toward urban life is accelerating. There is a very good chance that you will live the rest of your life in a city. This raises a bunch of questions. Among them is the following: What kind of urban physical environment best allows human well-being, freedom, creativity, and justice to flourish?

This course examines this question from an interdisciplinary perspective. Drawing on anthropology, geography, history, sociology, urban planning, art and architecture we will consider the past and future of the city as a human built environment that reflects and reproduces cultural values, ideals, and ways of living. Our notion of “urban form” or *urban materiality* covers both the design and architecture of cities, including the form and arrangement of buildings, streets, squares, parks, other open spaces, and public monuments. Our analysis is sensitive to both the technologies and aesthetics of urban form and evolution.

We have two main objectives. One objective is to put the city into trans-historical and cross-cultural perspective so as to better understand the political, economic, and cultural factors that produce variation in urban form. The other objective is to use this understanding of variation in urban form to explore how cities might be redesigned to deal with the great questions of 21st century urban life. How can cities manage their material environments so as to become ecologically-sustainable? What does the socially equitable or just city look like? What aesthetic values in the design of buildings and public space can help integrate cultural diversity and promote shared civic identity and pride? In short, what makes for the “Good” City in the New Urban Age?

Course Requirements

You will be graded on:

- (1) Class attendance and participation = 15% (this may include some short in-class writing assignments).
- (2) Three take-home writing assignments = 60%.
- (3) Final Research Paper (Graduate Students) or Take Home Exam (Undergraduates) = 25%. Undergraduates may elect to write a Research Paper instead of a final exam.

The lifeblood of this course is class discussion. Assigned reading has been kept to a minimum. Thus, everyone is required to have all reading finished for the days assigned. **You should come to class with printouts of the readings, and thoroughly prepared to discuss this material.**

Required Reading

All required readings are posted on the course portfolio site at <http://portfolio.du.edu/cultcity>. Readings are listed under the dates and topics to which they relate.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Sept 11

Introduction and Overview.

Sept 14

Good City, Just City, Right to the City.

READING:

- Saitta, D. and K. Cascioli 2011 Culturing Community in Urban Design. *The Denver Post*, February 7.
- Harvey, D. 2003. The Right to the City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27:939-941.
- Griffin, T. 2015 Defining the Just City Beyond Black and White. In *The Just City Essays*, edited by T. Griffin. City College of New York.

DISTRIBUTE ASSIGNMENT #1.

Week 2

Sept 18

Origins of the Modern City.

READING:

- Harvey, D. 2006. The Political Economy of Public Space. In *The Politics of Public Space*, edited by S. Low and N. Smith. Routledge.

Sept 21

The Symbolic City

READING:

- Wagenaar, M. 2000 Townscapes of Power. *GeoJournal* 51.

ASSIGNMENT #1 IS DUE.

Week 3

Sept 25

The Industrial City.

READING:

- Engels, F. 1845 The Great Towns. From *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*.

Sept 28

The Garden City and The City Beautiful.

READING:

- Howard, E. 1898 “Author’s Introduction” and “The Town-Country Magnet”. From *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*.
- Rose, J. 1996 The City Beautiful Movement. In *City Beautiful: The 1901 Plan for Washington DC*. Online at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/citybeautiful/dchome.html>

VIDEO: View before class: A short film about the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. <http://www.pinkyshow.org/projectarchives/videos/fabulous-imperialism-the-1893-columbian-exposition>

DISTRIBUTE ASSIGNMENT #2.

Week 4

Oct 2

The Utopian City: Radiant and Broadacre.

READING:

- Wright, F.L. 1935 Broadacre City: A New Community Plan. *Architectural Record*.
- Le Corbusier 1929 *The City of Tomorrow and its Planning* (excerpts). MIT Press.

- Oct 5 **The Decanted City: Suburbia and The American Dream.**
Reading:
➤ Berman, M. 1982 Robert Moses: The Expressway World. From *All That is Solid Melts into Air*.

Week 5

- Oct 9 **The Jacobsian City.**
READING:
➤ Jacobs, J. 1958 Downtown is for People. *Fortune Magazine*, April.
ASSIGNMENT #2 IS DUE.

- Oct 12 **Utopia Lost: The Story of Pruitt-Igoe.**
VIDEO: View Before Class: “The Pruitt-Igoe Myth”. Access at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKgZM8y3hso&t=245s>
READING:
➤ Heathcott, J. 2012 Pruitt-Igoe and the Critique of Public Housing. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 78 (4).

Week 6

- Oct 16 **The Fortress City.**
READING:
➤ Davis, M. 1990 *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (excerpt). Verso.

- Oct 19 **The Retrofitted City.**
READING:
➤ Charter of the New Urbanism 2000 *Bulletin of Science, Technology, and Society* 20:339-441.
➤ Marcuse, P. 2000 The New Urbanism: The Dangers So Far. *The Planning Review* 36:4-6.
VIDEO: View Before Class: “The Ghastly Tragedy of the Suburbs.” TED Talk by James Howard Kunstler. https://www.ted.com/talks/james_howard_kunstler_dissects_suburbia
DISTRIBUTE ASSIGNMENT #3.

Week 7

- Oct 23 **The Branded City.**
READING:
➤ Klingmann, A. 1997 Beyond Bilbao. In *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy*. MIT Press.
➤ Lindsey, G. 2018 One Icon, Two Audiences: How the Denver Art Museum Used Their New Building to Both Brand the City and Bolster Civic Pride. *Journal of Urban Design* 23:193-205.

- Oct 26 **The Monumental City.**
READING:
➤ Savage, K. 1999 The Past in the Present: The Life of Memorials. *Harvard Design Magazine*, Fall.
➤ Landrieu, M. 2017. Speech on the Removal of Confederate Monuments in New Orleans. May 19.

- Marsh, D. and G. Saul. 2018 On Monuments and Racial Violence. *Anthropology News*, July.

Week 8

Oct 30

The Intercultural City.

- Wood, P. and C. Landry 2008 The City Through an Intercultural Lens. In *The Intercultural City*. Earthscan Press.
- Qadeer, M. 2009 What is This Thing Called Multicultural Planning? *The Bridge* 2 (9): 10-13.

Nov 2

The Just City.

READING:

- McGuirk, J. 2014. Medellin: Social Urbanism. In *Radical Cities*. Verso.
- Cruz, T. and F. Forman. 2015. Public Imagination, Citizenship, and an Urgent Call for Justice. In *The Just City Essays*, edited by T. Griffin. City College of New York.

Week 9

Nov 6

The Sustainable City.

READING:

- Owen, D. 2004. Green Manhattan. *The New Yorker*, October.
- Agyeman, J. 2012. Just Sustainabilities. Blog post at julianagyeman.com.
- Hawkes, J. 2013 Shaping Policies: Culture-Sensitive and Context-Based Policies in Sustainable Development. Paper presented at the Hangzhou International Congress “Culture: Key to Sustainable Development.”

ASSIGNMENT #3 IS DUE.

Nov 9

The Smart City.

- Totty, W. 2017. The Rise of the Smart City. *The Wall Street Journal*, April 17.
- Kitchen, R. 2014 Making Sense of Smart Cities: Addressing Present Shortcomings. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society* 8:131-136.

DISTRIBUTE FINAL ASSIGNMENT (UNDERGRADUATES).

Week 10

Nov 13

The Future City.

READING:

- Angel, S. 2017. Urban Forms and Future Cities: A Commentary. *Urban Planning* 2:1-5.
- Maddox, D. 2015 Cities in Imagination. In *The Just City Essays*, edited by T. Griffin. City College of New York.

Nov 16

NO CLASS: Tutorials to Discuss Final Papers.

Week 11

Nov 19

Final Papers and Exams are Due.