**Spring 2011**

**Urban Geography**

GEOG 341

Monday and Thursday: 11.10-12.25

Room: HN 1022

Stephen Boatright – Instructor

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All Email Correspondence MUST include the Course Name in the Subject

Office Hours: Monday 10.00-11.00 (HN 1032)

Subject to Change

Description:

In this course we will survey key concepts in urban geography and seek to apply them to the world we live in through class discussion and written assignments. We will orient ourselves historically by looking political economic development of the city from the early modern period, through Industrial Revolution, to the contemporary period of globalization. The course will then shift to focus on issues and phenomena that are radically changing the social and physical organization of the city. Class readings will be primarily concerned with cities in the West. This focus is in part a reflection of our living in New York City, but we will also query this perspective. What does it mean to use Western cities as a model for ‘the city’? How well do the concepts developed in the study of the West reflect the realities of non-Western cities?

Objectives and Expectations:

The main objective of this course is to develop students’ critical thinking skills so that they are able to coherently grapple with the diversity and dynamism of social and spatial phenomena. Specifically, we will try to make sense of the myriad aspects of the ‘urban’ by looking at the history of the modern city, the patterns of urban change, and the relationship between cities and globalization. As critical and creative thought must be coherently argued in language, this course will be writing intensive, and students will be expected to improve on all aspects of their writing, including grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Moreover, as class readings will be complied from a variety of sources, it will be of the utmost importance for students to cultivate a sensitive reading eye; so a further objective of the course will be to hone reading skills in order to understand how authorial intentions, semantic ambiguities, and cultural allusions add to and/or subtract from the texts.

Assessment:

This will be a writing and discussion intensive course. Students will be required to maintain a blog throughout the semester with weekly 300-word postings and submit a 3000-word essay at the end of the semester. In addition, students will need to compose two questions for each reading to be discussed in class. We will discuss these assignments in detail at the beginning of the semester. All students will be expected to turn in well-composed and proofread writing assignments and to come to class on time prepared to engage in thoughtful and critical conversation.

Class Participation and Weekly Reading Questions (2 per reading): 20%

Blog Entries (12 postings 300 words each): 40%

Final Paper (3000 words): 40%

Attendance is mandatory and excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. All unexcused absences over two will result in a grade deduction; two instances of tardiness will be regarded as one unexcused absence. Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after the original due date, after that no credit will be given. Incompletes will not be given except in the case of exceptional and well-documented circumstances. Breaches in academic integrity will not be tolerated and will result in an ‘F’ for the relevant assignment.

**Statement on Academic Integrity:**

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

**Recommended Text (Available at Shakespeare and Co. 939 Lexington Ave.):**

Knox, Paul and S. Pinch. *Urban Social Geography*, 6th ed. London: Prentice Hall. 2010

ISBN: 978-0-273-71763-8

All other readings will be made available in class.

**Week-by-Week Syllabus:**

Week 1

Monday, August 29: Introduction

Thursday, September 1:

Mumford, Lewis. (1997) “What is a City?” in *The City Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Simmel, Georg. “The Metropolis and Mental Life”

Wirth, Louis. (1997) “Urbanism as a Way of Life.” in *The City Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Week 2

Monday, September 5: **No Class**

Thursday, September 8:

Debord, Guy. (1983 [2010.]) “The Organization of Territory.” in *Society of the Spectacle*. Black & Red: Detroit.

Benjamin, Walter. (1986) “Paris: Capital of the 19th Century.” in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. Schocken: New York.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 1

Week 3 - (A Streetscape)

Monday, September 12:

Amin, A., & Graham, S. (1997). The ordinary city. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *22*(4), 411-429.

Huhtamo, Erkki. (2009) Messages on the Wall: An Archaeology of Public Media Displays. In *Urban Screens Reader*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 2

Thursday, September 15:

Harman, G. (2009). *Prince of networks: Bruno Latour and metaphysics*. *Victoria*. Melbourne: Re-press. Chapter 1: Irreductions.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 3

Week 4 - (Wall Street)

Monday, September 19:

Kirkpatrick, L. O., & Smith, M. P. (2011). The Infrastructural Limits to Growth: Rethinking the Urban Growth Machine in Times of Fiscal Crisis. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *35*(3), 477-503.

**(Day of Debate around current development projects in NYC – Atlantic Yards, Ground Zero, Willets Point, Williamsburg-Greenpoint rezoning, Gowanus, others…)**

Thursday, February 25:

Weber, R., Greenlee, A., & Miller, J. (2010). Selling City Futures : The Financialization of Urban Redevelopment Policy for their cooperation and. *Economic Geography*, *86*(3), 251-274.

Christophers, B. (2009). Complexity, finance, and progress in human geography. *Progress in Human Geography*, *33*(6), 807-824.

Week 5 - (A Workplace)

Monday, September 26:

Bigelow, Gordeon. (2005) Let There Be Markets: The evangelical roots of economics. *Harper’s*. May: 2005.

Mitchell, T. (2006). The work of economics: how a discipline makes its world. *European Journal of Sociology*, *46*(02), 297.

Thursday, September 29: **No Class**

Week 6 - (A Public Housing Development)

Monday, October 3:

Brash, J. (2003). Invoking Fiscal Crisis: MORAL DISCOURSE AND POLITICS IN NEW YORK CITY. *Social Text*, *21*(3 76), 59-83.

Hackworth, Jason. (2006) *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism*. Cornell University Press: Cornell, NY. Chapters 1, 2, 3

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 4

Thursday, October 6:

Heidegger, M. (2001). Building, Dwelling, Thinking. In *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics.

Blokland, T. (2008). “You Got to Remember you Live in Public Housing”: Place-Making in an American Housing Project. *Housing, Theory and Society*, *25*(1), 31-46.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 5

Week 7 - (Open)

Monday, October 10: **No Class**

Thursday, October 13:

Sassen, S. (2008). Mortgage Capital and Its Particularities: A New Frontier for Global Finance. *Journal of International Affairs*, *62*(1).

Michael E. Stone. (2006) “Pernicious Problems in Housing Finance” in *A Right to Housing: Foundation for a New Social Agenda,* Rachel G. Bratt, Michael E. Stone, and Chester Hartman (eds.) Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

Week 8 - (Greenpoint-Williamsburg Waterfront)

Monday, October 17:

Brown, B. and V. Cropper. (2001) New Urban and Standard Suburban Subdivisions: Evaluating Psychological and Social Goals. *Journal of the American Planning Association*. 67: 4, 402-419.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 6

Thursday, October 20:

Florida, Richard. (2002) “The Rise of the Creative Class” in *Washington Monthly*. <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0205.florida.html>

Duany, Anders. (2001). Three Cheers for Gentrification. In *The American Enterprise*. 12:3. April. 36-39.

*Urban Social Geography,* Chapter 12

Week 9 - (Times Square)

Monday, October 24:

McKenzie, E. (2005). Constructing The Pomerium in Las Vegas: A Case Study of Emerging Trends in American Gated Communities. *Housing Studies*, *20*(2), 187-203.

Mitchell, K., Beckett, K. (2008). Securing the Global City : Crime , Consulting , Risk , and Ratings in the Production of Urban Space. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, *15*(1), 75-100.

Thursday, October 27:

Harris, David Evan. (2007). São Paulo: A City Without Ads. *Adjusters*. 73. 3 August 2007. <http://www.adbusters.org/magazine/73/Sao_Paulo_A_City_Without_Ads.html>

Broeckmann, Andreas. (2009). Intimate Publics: Memory, Performance, and Spectacle in Urban Environments. In *Urban Screens Reader*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 7

Week 10 - (Bodies in Public Places)

Monday, October 31:

Hubbard, P., R. Matthews, J. Scoular, and L. Agustin. (2008) “Away from prying eyes? The urban geographies of `adult entertainment.’” in *Progress in Human Geography* 32:3. 363-381.

Sothern, Matthew. (2007) “You could truly be yourself if you just weren’t you: sexuality, disabled body space, and the (neo)liberal politics of self-help.” in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space.* Vol. 25:1, 144-159.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 11

Thursday, November 3:

Tayler, Jeffery. (2000). Another French Revolution: In Marseilles, Europe Confronts Its North African Future. *Harper’s*. November 2000. 58-66.

Kramer, Jane. (1972). Les Pieds Noirs. *The New Yorker*. 25 November, 1972.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 8

Week 11 - (Minority)

Monday, November 7:

Guy, Simon, S. Graham, and S. Marvin. (1996). Privatized Utilities and Regional Governance: The New Regional Managers? In *Regional Studies*. 30:8 733-739.

Graham, Stephen. (2010). When Infrastructure Fails. In *Disrupted Cities: When Infrastructure Fails*. Stephen Graham, editor. New York: Routledge.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 9

Thursday, November 10:

McKee, Y. (2008). Haunted Housing : and the Biopolitics of Sustainability in New Orleans. *Grey Room*, *30* (84-113).

Pinckney, Darryl. (2011). Deep in the Bowl: Memory of a Shrinking City. *Harper’s*. September 2011.

Week 12 - (7 Train)

Monday, November 14:

Castells, Manuel (1996, second edition, 2000). *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. Chapter 6: The Space of Flows.

Thursday, November 17:

Bunnell, Tim. (2004). ‘Cyberjaya and Putrajaya: Malaysia’s “Intelligent” Cities’ In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 348-353.

Madon, Shirin. (2004). Bangalore: Internal Disparities of a City Caught in the Information Age. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 309-313.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. (2000). Megacity. In *Grey Room*. Fall 2000. 8-25.

Week 13 - (JFK, LGA, or EWK)

Monday, November 21:

Cartier, C., Castells, M., & Qiu, J. L. (2005). The Information Have-Less: Inequality, Mobility, and Translocal Networks in Chinese Cities. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *40*(2), 9-34.

Gottdeiner, Mark. (2004). Deterritorialization and the Airport. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 185-188.

Webber, Melvyn. (2004). ‘The Urban Place and the Non-Place Urban Realm. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 50-52.

Tuesday, November 22:

Fan, Lixin. (2009). *Last Train Home*. Canada Council for the Arts. Guangzhou, Guangdong, China.

Thursday, November 24: **No Class**

Week 14 - (Mobile Technology)

Monday, November 28:

Graham, Stephen. (2004) Introduction: From Dreams of Transcendence to the Remediation of Urban Life. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 1-29.

Thursday, December 1:

Graham, Stephen. (2004). ‘Excavating the Material Geographies of Cybercities. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 138-142.

Dodge, Martin. (2004). The Geographies of E-Commerce: The Case of Amazon.com. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 221-225.

Carey, Zack. (2004). Generation Txt: The Telephone Hits the Street. In *The Cybercities Reader*. Editor Stephen Graham. New York: Routledge. 133-137.

Week 15 – (Open)

Monday, December 5:

Sassen, Saskia. (2009). Reading the City in a Global Digital Age. In *Urban Screens Reader*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

Thursday, December 8:

Massumi,Brian. (2002). *Parables for the Virtual*. Durham: Duke University Press. Chapter 8: Strange Horizon: Buildings, Biograms, and the Body Topologic. 177-207.

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 10

Week 16

Monday, December 12: **(Final Paper Due)** Conclusion

*Urban Social Geography*, Chapter 14