

Fall 20016
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Off. hrs. T, 10-11 & by apt, 203 Buell

Graduate School of Architecture,
Planning and Preservation

**HISTORIES OF AMERICAN CITIES:
PATTERNS OF URBAN LIFE & URBAN DESIGN**

A 6769

Mondays 11-1, 600 Avery Hall

Almost every city entails a mix of professional planning, raw unregulated development, and local anomalies. This dynamic has certainly defined American cities for over 300 years. It extends into and beyond national borders, embodying the allure and shock of the modern metropolis, affecting what is possible in the present and what people can imagine about the future.

This class explores the evolution of some key ideas, policies, spatial forms and conflicts in American cities, both generic and unique. While focusing on historical patterns, each session takes up key questions for the present. What is “downtown” and who decides where it is located? How do building sites and infrastructure influence social patterns and natural environments?

Lectures and readings explore topics like the uses and distortions of maps; transient commercial spaces; typologies for urban housing, suburbs and exurbs; changing sites and purposes for civic sites like stadia; the collective necessity of infrastructure; the appeal and neglect of nature.

Regular class attendance is *required*. So are weekly readings: both primary (historical) sources and more recent (secondary) analyses. Read each week’s assignments *before* class for background.

Three 1-page analyses of various kinds of sources are also *required* (submitted *on time*), plus a research paper (or another approved final project). There is no exam--- except for students who miss 3 or more classes.

WEEK 1 (Sept. 12). AMERICAN PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY & CONFLICT

Inscribing beliefs on the landscape; transnational influences; colonial towns and origin myths; the idea of. ‘American exceptionalism’.

NOTE: The first set of readings for every week are *required* & available on Canvas.

Please begin with some short BACKGROUND READINGS for the class:

“Timeline,” *Settlement Patterns: Perspectives* 30 (1999), 7-9

“Urban Matters,” *Praxis* 10 (2008): 4-15.

NB: Architectural history is an essential underpinning for urban history. Also look at:

David Gosling, *The Evolution of American Urban Design* (2003)

For background on Native American and colonial-era cities, see

William Fash and Leonardo Luján, *The Art of Urbanism: How Mesoamerican Kingdoms Represented Themselves in Architecture and Imagery* (Washington, DC, 2009)

Richard L. Kagan, et.al., *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493-1793* (New Haven, 2000), esp. 1-11, 33-39

Karen Kupperman, “International at the Creation: Early Modern American History” in Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, 2002), 102-33

Bernard Bailyn, *The Barbarous Years: The Peopling of British North America: The Conflict of Civilizations, 1600-1675* (New York, 2012)

WEEK 2 (Sept. 19). MANUFACTURING CIVIC & COMMERCIAL CULTURE

The meanings of maps; business patrons for urban plans; the dissemination of grids and town squares; urban ‘boosterism’; producing industrial and commercial space.

James Corner, “The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique, Invention,” in Denis Cosgrove, ed., *Mapping* (London, 1999), 213-52

Jack H. Williamson, "The Grid: History, Use, and Meaning," in Victor Margolis, *Design Discourse* (Chicago, 1989), 171-86

What Is a City? Remaking the Urban after Hurricane Katrina (Athens, 2008), 172-185

Recommended:

Bill Hubbard, Jr., *American Boundaries: The Nation, the States, the Rectangular Survey* (Chicago, 2009)

David Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York Landscape* (2002)

Nancy Seasholes, *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston* (Cambr. 2003)

Robert Wright, *The First Wall Street: Chestnut Street, Philadelphia and the Birth of American Finance* (Chicago, 2005)

WEEK 3 (Sept. 26). PROGRESSIVES & THE “CITY BEAUTIFUL”

American visions of modern urban growth; civic centers and neighborhood reforms; the ‘new woman’; social sciences and regional modernisms.

***** First Assignment Due**

- Jane Addams, “The Objective Value of a Social Settlement” (1893) (selected pp) from C.Lasch, ed, *The Social Thought of Jane Addams* (NY, 1965), 44-55, 60-61
 Randolph Bourne, “Our Unplanned Cities,” “The Architect” (both 1915) and “Trans-National America (1916) in *Randolph Bourne: The Radical Will*, ed. Olaf Hansen (Berkeley, 1977), 248-9, 260-64, 275-81
 Daniel T. Rodgers, “An Age of Social Politics” in Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, 2002), 254-273

Recommended:

- Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett, *Plan of Chicago* (1909; Chicago, 1997), 99-109
 Jessica Ellen Sewell, *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco, 1890-1915* (Minneapolis, 2011)
 Howard Gillette, *Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington DC* (Baltimore, 1995)
 Nick Yablon, *Untimely Ruins: An Archaeology of American Urban Modernity, 1819-1919* (Chicago, 2009)
 Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, *The American Vitruvius: An Architect’s Handbook of Civic Art* (New York, 1922, 1992)
 Jan Cigliano and SB Landau, eds., *The Grand American Avenue, 1850-1920* (SF, 1994)
 Max Page, *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan, 1900-1940* (Chicago 1999), .52-67

WEEK 4: (Oct. 3). THE ‘HOUSING CRISIS’ IN CITIES AND SUBURBS

Modern “projects” as ideal or dystopian environments; the elusive search for a “Perfect Home”; the role of site plans in residential development; affordable housing.

- Tenement House Department of the City of New York, *For You* (New York, 1917)
 Eric Mumford, “The ‘Tower in a Park’ in America: Theory and Practice, 1920-1960,” *Planning Perspectives* 10 (1995), 17-41
 D.J. Waldie, *Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir* (New York, 1996), 1-14
 Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson, *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbia* (Hoboken, 2009), viii-xiii, 2-13

Recommended:

- John Bauman et. Al., *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes: In Search of an Urban Housing Policy in 20th-Century America* (University Park, PA, 2000)
 Barbara M. Lane, *Houses for a New World: Builders and Buyers in American Suburbs, 1945-1965* (Princeton, 2015)
 Lawrence Herzog, *Global Suburbs: Urban Sprawl from the Rio Grande to Rio de Janeiro*

WEEK 5 (Oct. 10) . COMMERCIAL CULTURE IN AMERICAN URBAN LIFE

'The world-as-exhibition' from department stores to shopping centers; creating downtown; the demise of Main Streets; the vulgar Strip and monotonous malls

**** Second Assignment due**

Victor Gruen, "Cityscape and Landscape," *Arts and Architecture* (Sept. 1955)
 Ann Bergren, "Jon Jerde and the Architecture of Pleasure," *Assemblage* 37 (1998), 8-35
 Anna Klingmann, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (2007), 312-29

Recommended:

Alex Wall, *Victor Gruen* (Barcelona, 2005), esp. pp. 58-72, 107-13
 Ann Satterthwaite, *Going Shopping: Consumer Choices & Community Consequences* (New Haven, 2001)
 Timothy Davis, "The Miracle Mile Revisited," in Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry, eds., *Exploring Everyday Landscapes* (Knoxville, 1997), pp. 93-114
 John Chase, *Glitter Stucco and Dumpster Diving: Reflections on Building Production in the Vernacular City* (New York, 2002)

WEEK 6 (Oct. 17): THE NEW DEAL, PRAGMATISM & INFRASTRUCTURE

Modernities and militarism; soft and hard infrastructure; public opinion and expertise; debating tactics and priorities: is there a legacy for the New Deal?

Lateral Office, et al., "New New Deal: Infrastructures of Life Support," in Katrina Stoll and Scott Lloyd, eds., *Infrastructure as Architecture* (Berlin, 2010), 56-63
 Elizabeth Mossup, "Landscapes of Infrastructure" and Chris Reed, "Public Works Practice," in Charles Waldheim, ed., *The Landscape Urbanism Reader* (New York, 2006), 165-177, 267-285
 Kazys Varnelis, "Invisible City: Telecommunication," in Varnelis, ed. *The Infrastructural City* (Barcelona, 2008), 118-129

Recommended:

Robert Kargon and Arthur Molella, *Invented Edens: Techno-Cities of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2008) esp. 67-90
 Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Montreal, 2011)
 Tim Culvahouse, ed., *The Tennessee Valley Authority* (New York, 2007)
 Russell Bourne, *Americans on the Move: A History of Waterways, Railways and Highways* (New York, 1995)
 Alastair Gordon, *Naked Airport: A Cultural History of the World's Most Revolutionary Structure* (New York, 2004)
 Keller Easterling, *Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways, Houses* (1999), 98-111

WEEK 7 (Oct. 24) URBAN CENTER & EDGE CITY IN THE POST-WAR ERA

Urban renewal downtown; slum clearance, luxury apartments and convention centers; expressionism and the "new humanism" in design; new-towns-in-town and beyond.

**** Research Proposal due**

Catherine Bauer, "Do Americans Hate Cities?" (1956) rpt. *Architecture California*, 1994

Louise Mazingo, *Pastoral Capitalism: A History of Suburban Corporate Landscapes* (Cambridge, 2011), 61-91

Richard M. Sommer, "Philadelphia – The Urban Design of Philadelphia: Taking the Towne for the City" in Rudolph El-Khoury and Edward Robbins, eds., *Shaping the City: Studies in History, Theory and Urban Design* (NY/Lon, 2004), 149-176

Recommended:

Alan Shulman, ed., *Miami Modern Metropolis: Paradise and Paradox in Midcentury Architecture and Planning* (Miami Beach, 2009)

Manuel Castells and Peter Hall, *Technopoles of the World: The Making of 21st Century Industrial Complexes* (New York, 1994)

Max Page and Timothy Mennel, eds., *Reconsidering Jane Jacobs* (New York, 2011)

Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York, 2010)

Daniel M. Abramson, *Obsolescence* (Chicago, 2015)

WEEK 8 (Oct. 31): ENVIRONMENTALISM AND URBANISM

The legacy of urban parks; rediscovering early green design; Earth Day & environmental justice; American sensibilities or disdain for natural environments?

Frederick Law Olmsted, "Public Planning and the Enlargement of Towns" (1870) in S.B. Sutton, ed., *Civilizing American Cities* (NY, 1997), 52-99 (selections—**rec.**)

Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (NYotk 1971), 137-60

Matthew Gancy, *The Fabric of Space: Water, Modernity and the Urban Imagination* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 45-89

Recommended:

David Gissen, *Subnature: Architecture's Other Environment* (New York, 2009)

-----, *Manhattan Atmospheres: Architecture, the Interior Environment and Urban Crisis* (New York, 2015)

Raina Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy, *Geographies of Trash* (New York, 2015)

Andrew Zolli, *Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back* (NY, 2011)

Reinhold Martin, "Environment, c. 1973," *Grey Room* (Winter 2004), 79-101 (Minneapolis, 2014)

Matthew Klingle, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (New Haven, 2007)

WEEK 9. (Nov. 7) ELECTION DAY HOLIDAY

WEEK 10 (Nov. 14). URBAN CRISES/ URBAN SPECTACLES of the 1960s

***** Third Assignment due**

Community design and identity politics; Rustbelt and Sunbelt cities in a post-Fordist economy; tourism, tax revenues and cities as “growth machines”

Paul Davidoff, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," *Journal of the APA* (1965),
 rpt Richard LeGates, et.al., eds., *The City Reader* (New York, 1996), 421-434
 Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto* (New York, 1978), 68-72
 Patrick Schumacher and Christian Rogner, “After Ford” in Georgia Daskalakis, et al.,
 eds, *Stalking Detroit* (Barcelona, 2001), 48-56

Recommended:

Peter Wolf, *The Future of the City: New Dimensions in Urban Planning* (N York, 1974)
 Thomas Segrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (Princeton, 1996)
 Robert Halpern, *Rebuilding the Inner City: A History of Neighborhood Initiatives* (1995)
 Richard Bernard and Bradley Rice, *Sunbelt Cities: Policy and Control since WWII*
 (Austin, 1985)
 Alan Altshuler and David Luberoff, *Mega-Projects* (Washington, DC, 2003)

WEEK 11 (Nov 21). SPECIAL ENCLAVES for HISTORY, SCIENCE, FINANCE

Historic preservation and contextual design; urban design’s guidelines & regulations; the rise of theory; the “LA School” on urban controls & inequalities

Kevin Lynch, “City Models and City Design” in Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form*
 (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 277-291
 Joel Warren Barna, *The See-Through Years: Creation & Destruction in Texas*
Architecture and Real Estate, 1981-1991 (Austin, 1991), 91-107
 Max Page and Randall Mason, eds., *Giving Preservation a History* (New York and
 London, 2004), esp. Chris Wilson, “Santa Fe,” 185-206
 Margaret O’Mara, “Landscapes of Knowledge and High Technology,” *Places*19: 48-53

Recommended:

Michael Dear, *The Postmodern Urban Condition* (Malden & Oxford, 2000), 141-160
 Era Ben-Joseph and Terry Szold, eds., *Regulating Place* (New York/London, 2005)
 Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern*
City (Minneapolis, 2009)
 Crosbie Smith and Jon Agar, eds., *Making Space for Science* (New York, 2016)

**WEEK 12 (Nov. 28): URBAN DESIGN and URBAN HISTORY:
THE LURE OF THE FUTURE and RETURN OF THE REPRESSED**

The ‘experience’ economy; public-private partnerships; the rise of ‘big data’;
communities and divisions; urban disasters and urban resilience

Michael B. Katz, “What Is an American City?” *Dissent* (2009), rept in Raymond Mohl
and Roger Biles, eds., *The Making of Urban America*, 3rd ed. (New York, 2012),
pp. 333-340

Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures,
Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (L & NY, 2002), 203-216

Alex Krieger and William S. Saunders, eds., *Urban Design* (Minneapolis, 2009),
especially Michael Sorkin, “The End(s) of Urban Design,” pp. 155-182

Recommended:

William J. Mitchell, *City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn* (Cambridge, 1995)

Robert Gottlieb, *Reinventing Los Angeles: Nature and Community in the
Global City* (Cambridge, 2007)

Rebecca Kinney, *Beautiful Wasteland: The Rise of Detroit as America’s Postindustrial
Frontier* (Minneapolis, 2016)

Michael Lariace & Elizabeth Macdonald, eds., *The Urban Design Reader* (NY 2007)

Michael Sorkin, ed., *The Architecture of the National Insecurity State* (New York, 2007)