

Fall 2013  
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Graduate School of Architecture,  
Planning and Preservation

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

A 6769

Mondays 11-1, 114 Avery Hall

If all cities are a synthesis of raw unregulated development, precise professional master plans and unexpected local anomalies, this dynamic has defined American cities for more than 300 years. As such, they have long embodied the allure and the shock of the modern metropolis. This modernity is not so much a stylistic idiom as a multiplicity of contested forces such as traditions and inventions, rich and poor, elite and popular culture. Inscribed in physical settings this legacy is still resonant in our contemporary lives.

This class explores such spatial forms, both generic and unique creations. While we focus on historical patterns and variations, each session takes up key questions for the present. Who decides where “downtown” is located? How have Americans envisioned homes – and housing? How do new sites influence existing social patterns and natural environments? How does infrastructure affect the efficiency and equity of a city? The past affects what is possible in the present and what people can imagine about the future.

Lectures and readings juxtapose chronology with analyses of particular spatial patterns and cultural themes. These include: the use and distortions of maps; changing sites and purposes for civic centers; edge cities, suburbs and exurbs; the power and transience of commerce; the collective necessity of urban infrastructure; the appeal and neglect of nature.

Regular class attendance is required, as are weekly readings, which include both primary (historical) sources and diverse contemporary analyses. Read each week’s assignments *before* class to give you some background. Three 1-page analyses of various kinds of sources are also *required* (on time) plus a research paper (or another approved final project). There is no exam --- *except* for those students who do not attend class regularly.

**WEEK 1 (Sept. 9). PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY AND CONFLICT**

Histories and futures; the myth of exceptionalism; transnationalism and the power of locations; inscribing beliefs on the landscape; colonial towns and origin myths.

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

Gyan Prakash and Kevin Kruse, eds., *The Spaces of the Modern City: Imaginaries, Politics and Everyday Life* (Princeton, 2008), “Introduction,” 7-18

Greg Hise, “Architecture as State Building: A Challenge to the Field,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (June 2008), 173-77

Architectural history is an essential underpinning for urban history. You might try:

Gwendolyn Wright, *USA: Modern Architectures in History* (London & Chicago, 2008)

David P. Handlin, *American Architecture* (London & New York, 2004)

Background histories of American urbanism and urban design:

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

Barry Cullingworth, *Planning in the USA: Policies, Issues, Processes* (1997)

CourseWorks has texts on Native American, Spanish, British & other colonial-era cities:

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

David Hornbeck, “Spanish Legacy in the Borderlands,” in Michael P. Conzen, ed., *The Making of the American Landscape* (New York, 1990), 51-62

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

Joseph S. Wood, *The New England Village* (Baltimore, 1997), 52-70

**WEEK 2 (Sept. 16). MANUFACTURING CIVIC & COMMERCIAL CULTURE**

The meanings and deceptions of maps; urban plans and their patrons; dissemination of the grid and the town square; urban boosterism; producing industrial space.

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

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

Dell Upton, *Another City: Urban Life and Public Space in the New American Republic* (New Haven, 2008), 281-94

*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* (Cambrid, 2003)

**WEEK 3 (Sept. 23). THE “CITY BEAUTIFUL” & THE PROGRESSIVE CITY**

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

**\*\*\* First Assignment Due**

Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett, *Plan of Chicago* (1909; Chicago, 1997), 99-109

Jane Addams, “The Objective Value of a Social Settlement” (1893) in Christopher Lasch, ed, *The Social Thought of Jane Addams* (New York, 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

Max Page, *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan, 1900-1940* (Chicago, 1999), 52-67

Recommended:

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)

**WEEK 4: (Sept. 30). THE ‘HOUSING CRISIS’ IN CITIES AND SUBURBS**

Modern “projects” as ideal or dystopian environments; the elusive “Perfect Home”; affordable housing; the role of site plans in urban and suburban development.

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)

Andrew Blauvelt, ed., *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes* (Minneapolis, 2008)

Becky Nicholaides and Andrew Wiese, eds., *The Suburban Reader* (NY & Lond, 2006)

Barry Bergdoll Reinhold Martin, *Foreclosed:Rehousing the American Dream* (NY, 2012)

## **WEEK 5 (Oct. 7) . COMMERCIAL CULTURE IN AMERICAN URBAN LIFE**

‘The world-as-exhibition’ from department stores to shopping centers; the rise and demise of Main Streets; the audacious Strip and the monotonous Mall; cyber shopping

### **\*\* Second Assignment due**

Victor Gruen, “Cityscape and Landscape,” *Arts and Architecture* (Sept. 1955)

Alex Wall, *Victor Gruen* (Barcelona, 2005), 58-72, 107-13

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:

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) 93-114

John Chase, *Glitter Stucco and Dumpster Diving: Reflections on Building Production in the Vernacular City* (New York, 2002)

## **WEEK 6 (Oct. 14): THE NEW DEAL, PRAGMATISM & INFRASTRUCTURE**

Modernisms and modernities; soft and hard infrastructure services; traditions of American pragmatism; the legacy of the New Deal; Robert Moses as urban czar

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

Keller Easterling, *Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways, Houses* (1999), 98-111

Sarah Williams Goldhagen, 'American Collapse', *New Republic* (Aug. 27, 2007), 26-32

Recommended:

Kazys Varnelis, "Invisible City: Telecommunication," in Varnelis, ed. *The Infrastructural City* (Barcelona, 2008), 118-129

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)

Katrina Scott and Scott Lloyd, eds., *Infrastructure as Architecture* (Berlin, 2010)

Jameson Doig, *Empire on the Hudson: Entrepreneurial Vision and Political Power at the Port of New York Authority* (New York, 2009)

## **WEEK 7 (Oct. 21). URBAN CENTER & EDGE CITY IN THE POST-WAR ERA**

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

### **\*\* Research Proposal due**

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

Peter Galison, "War against the Center" in Antoine Picon and Alessandra Ponte, eds.

*Architecture and the Sciences: Exchanging Metaphors* (NYork, 2003), 197-227

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)

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)

Reinhold Martin, *Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media and Corporate Space* (Cambridge, 2003)

## **WEEK 8 (Oct. 28). ENVIRONMENTALISM AND URBANISM**

American sensibilities about and disdain for natural environments; the legacy of urban parks; rediscovering green design; Earth Day & its aftermath; environmental justice

- Frederick Law Olmsted, "Public Planning and the Enlargement of Towns" (1870) in S.B. Sutton, ed., *Civilizing American Cities* (NY, 1997), 52-99 (selections)  
 Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (NYotk 1971), 137-60  
 Reinhold Martin, "Environment, c. 1973," *Grey Room* (Winter 2004), 79-101  
 C Hight, "Portraying the Urban Landscape ," James Corner, "Landscape Urbanism," & Detlef Mertins, "landscapeurbanismhappensintime" (2003) in M Mostafavi et.al., eds., *Landscape Urbanism* (London, 2003), 22-32, 58-64, 235-141

Recommended:

- Robert Gottlieb, *Reinventing Los Angeles: Nature & Community in the Global City* (2000)  
 Barry Bergdoll, ed., *Rising Currents: Projects for New York's Waterfront* (NYork, 2011)  
 Richard Longstreth, ed., *Cultural Landscapes* (Minneapolis, 2008)  
 William Ramroth, *Planning for Disaster: How Natural and Man-Made Disasters Shape the Built Environment* (New York, 2007)  
 Joan Fitzgerald, *Emerald Cities: Urban Sustainability & Economic Development* (2010)  
 Andrew Ross, *Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City* [Phoenix] (Oxford and New York, 2011)

## **WEEK 9 (Nov 5). ELECTION DAY HOLIDAY**

## **WEEK 10 (Nov. 11). URBAN CRISES, URBAN SPECTACLES**

Community design and spaces of identity politics; Rustbelt and Sunbelt cities in a post-Fordist economy; urban design; tourism, tax revenues and cities as "growth machines"

### **\*\*\* Third Assignment due**

- 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  
 Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972), 3-20, 128-139, 160-63  
 Joel Warren Barna, *The See-Through Years: Creation & Destruction in Texas Architecture and Real Estates, 1981-1991* (Austin, 1991), 91-107  
 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)

Aron Vinegar & Michael Golec, eds., *Relearning from Las Vegas* (Minneapolis, 2009)

## **WEEK 11 (Nov 18). THEORY, SCIENCE, HISTORY & POSTMODERNISM**

Historic preservation and contextual design; the rise of theory; the “LA School” on gentrification, controls & inequalities; design guidelines/regulations

Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto* (New York, 1978), 68-72

Kevin Lynch, “City Models and City Design” in Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 277-291

Michael Dear, *The Postmodern Urban Condition* (Malden & Oxford, 2000), 141-160

Max Page and Randall Mason, eds., *Giving Preservation a History* (New York and London, 2004), esp. Chris Wilson, “Santa Fe,” 185-206

Recommended:

Era Ben-Joseph and Terry Szold, eds., *Regulating Place* (New York/London, 2005)

David Grahame Shane, *Recombinant Urbanism* (Chichester, GB, 2005)

Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern City* (Minneapolis, 2009)

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

Alex Krieger and William S. Saunders, eds., *Urban Design* (Minneapolis, 2009)

## **WEEK 12 (Nov. 25): THE LURE OF THE FUTURE/ RETURN OF THE REPRESSED**

Neo-traditional v. neo-avant-garde innovations; the primacy of “experience”; a resurgent environmentalism and historic preservation; local and global urbanism

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

Ellen Dunham-Jones, “75% Percent: The Next Big Architectural Project” and Mitchell Schwarzer, “The Spectacle of Ordinary Building,” in William Sanders, *Sprawl and Suburbia* (2005), 1-20, 74-90

Recommended:

*Praxis 10* “Urban Matters” (2008)

Roger Sherman, *L.A. under the Influence* (Minneapolis, 2010)

Andrew Ross, *Bird on Fire: Lessons from America's Least Sustainable City* [Phoenix]  
(New York, 2011)

Paloma Pavel, *Breakthrough Communities: Sustainability and Justice in the Next  
American Metropolis* (Cambridge, 2009)

Aseem Inam, *Planning for the Unplanned: Recovering from Crises in Megacities*  
(New York, 2005)

John Tbhackara, *In the Bubble – Designing in a Complex World* (Cambridge, 2005)

Malcolm Moor and Jon Rowland, *Urban Design Futures* (New York & London, 2006)