

The Unruly City

ARCH/LAND/MUD 529 | Spring 2017



The Cliff Dwellers; George Bellows, 1913.

Location: Givens Hall 118

Time: Friday, 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Instructor: Michael Allen, Senior Lecturer
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Course Description

The history of the American city is the history of conquering the "unruly": real estate parcels, neighborhoods, buildings, and even people that represent decay, obstacles to capital, unlawfulness or disorder. Designers denigrated unruliness in the pursuit of modernization in the 20th century, but today seem more conflicted on the constitution and remedies for disorder. Is disorder in the eye of the beholder? What disrupts urban life more, the broken windows of vacant houses or the arrival of Whole Foods in a poor neighborhood? Neighborhoods that have lost most of their population and buildings, or new football stadiums offered as economic and architectural solutions to blight? Programs of "right-sizing", urban agriculture, tactical urbanism, infrastructure planning, police reform, upzoning (or unzoning), historic preservation and mass transportation have operative impacts that can either squelch and protect the "unruly." This course begins with examination the divergent definitions of order and disorder that are shaping contemporary approaches to urban planning, governance and cultural production.

Contemporary debates on urban order draw on a key historic conflict from 1950s New York City: the public debate over planning impresario Robert Moses' never-built Lower Manhattan Expressway project (representing hegemony), which would have destroyed parts of SoHo and other neighborhoods, which ignited the opposition of activist and critic Jane Jacobs, whose *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* championed self-organizing traits of neighborhoods and opposed large-scale state intervention (representing autonomy). What seemed like stark ideological opposition has become more complicated, as Moses' commitment to public works fell to the trend of privatizing urban space, and Jacobs' theories influenced a generation of advocates, preservationists and urban planners whose practices inscribe new forms of sometimes-disruptive order on neighborhoods.

We will analyze the structural frames on the legibility of the city as the subject of divergent definitions of order and disorder, especially the police power of the state (zoning, planning, emergency management, policing) and the material force of capital (debt financing, the geography of investment, alternative autonomous economic systems). Cities are far more than objects of study, but also are subjects of management and perception. What modes of management and seeing are more beneficial shall be our primary question.

The Method of This Seminar

This seminar operates on a pedagogical model of participatory inquiry, where all participants shape the research questions and experiential priorities of the course. The seminar requires a high degree of participation through verbal discussion while also demanding a robust schedule of readings to support exploration of themes. While the instructor will lecture and guide, the seminar is a venue for each student to present questions, findings and connections located in readings and field trips. For readings, students should make every attempt to complete readings before meeting, but if not possible, at least discern authors' key points and themes. There is no hierarchy of reading on this syllabus, although the course books are central. This seminar invites uncertainty and even failure, because it is participatory. The seminar encourages research as practice; that is, research not for memorization but for critical understanding of subjects to advance students' own educational goals. Design students should have no fear.

Readings

These books are required:

- Mitchell Duneier, *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2016)
- Keller Easterling, *Subtraction* (New York: Sternberg Press, 2014)
- David Harvey, *Rebel Cities* (London, Verso, 2012)
- Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970)
- Sharon Zukin, *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Spaces* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Other required readings are accessible on Blackboard (<http://bb.wustl.edu>; denoted by asterisk on the syllabus) or will be distributed in class.

Required Work and Grading

The required work in the seminar will include four papers, a final research and design project, field trip notes, participation in the course glossary, participation in discussion and attendance. The final grade will be based on this formula:

Assigned Papers	40%
Final Project	30%
Glossary Project	10%
Attendance and Participation in Discussion	20%

Papers and work will be graded numerically out of 100 points. Final grades will be letter grades based on the university's standard grading, calculated from the numerical grades.

Attendance and Participation

All students should attend each class session, take notes and participate in discussions. *Only one unexcused absence is allowed. A second unexcused absence will result in automatic drop of one letter grade for the final course grade.* If a student cannot attend a session due to a conflicting academic requirement, that student should notify the instructor in writing one week prior to the session that will be missed. If a student has a medical or personal reason for absence, likewise the instructor shall be notified in writing at least prior to the start of class. When in doubt, please contact the instructor. Your grade will thank you. All field trips will occur during class time and are mandatory.

Response Papers

Papers will allow students space to explore topics within the course readings and experiences. Writing should endeavor to be bravely exploratory instead of authoritative. New concepts, histories and readings ought to inspire questions instead of confirming answers. There will be a short paper assigned on the first session due the second session. This paper will be 2-3 pages and will be graded pass/fail. This paper starts the flow of essay-thinking for the semester and will respond to the first session's themes. Grading will establish the expectations of the instructor.

There will be four assigned papers that will frame responses to the readings and site visits. These papers shall be 4-5 pages long. The prompts for the papers will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard, since course activity will influence the exact questions for each paper. If any student needs an extension on one of these assignments, s/he should ask for one at the start of the class *before* which the paper is due. *One extension will be granted, but only if it is requested according to the requirement listed on this syllabus.* A request for extension after a due date will not be granted. Late assignments will lose 3 points for each day late regardless of the day. The instructor strongly encourages submission of late work because even a failing grade will improve the student's average and ensure a better final grade.

Papers shall be submitted via email or in paper.

Glossary Assignments

Starting in week two, each student will take on the task of presenting a key term to the course in order to craft a *Glossary of the Unruly City* that will be distributed to all students at the conclusion of the course. This exercise allows students to share in the direction of course inquiry and teach the course for a moment. Students shall select an assumed key term from the readings for the week, and present briefly to the course at the start of the following session the term, its definition, its usage by an author or sources, and questions about that usage for the class to ask.

Glossary exercises should be written (one page only, please) and submitted to the instructor. These will not receive a numbered grade, but will be counted toward the final grade as either complete or incomplete. The glossary term assignment cannot be made up if missed; it will be considered incomplete. If a term has already been "added" to the glossary, a student should select a different term. The instructor will assign students to different weeks during the first session. If a student is going to be absent for the presentation, it is imperative to arrange a switch with the instructor.

Final Project

The final project will consist of a research and design project based on a site in St. Louis. The project will include a 12-15 page paper that analyzes a site through the framework of one of the thematic units of the course, utilizing course readings to make comparative studies of related sites in other American or even global cities. The paper will examine the constitution of order and disorder in the space. Students will then create proposed interventions for the sites that pose conservation or renewal programs that foster sustainable futures for the sites. The exact prompt will be distributed no later than week 10 of the course. The projects will be presented during the final week of the course, with guest critics present.

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for adhering to the university's academic integrity policies (for a full articulation of them, see <http://studentconduct.wustl.edu/academic-integrity/>). In particular, students should produce original work and avoid various other forms of academic dishonesty, including falsification of data and misrepresentation of sources. Failure to cite and formally acknowledge sources constitutes plagiarism, and will result in a failing grade (and likely disciplinary action within the bounds of Washington University's policies). *When in doubt, cite!*

Citations and Formatting

All work for the course should use either the Modern Language Association of Chicago Style of formatting, 11-point typefaces, standard margins and double spacing. Papers shall have titles and page numbers.

Schedule

Defining Order and Disorder

January 20

Luc Sante, "My Lost City," *The New York Review of Books* (November 6, 2003)
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2003/11/06/my-lost-city/>

Short films viewed in class:

The Big City (1956; Charles Guggenheim, director)

Charlie LeDuff Golfs the Length of Detroit (2012)

Clip from *Koyaanisqatsi* (1983; Godfrey Reggio, director)

Feature film viewed in class:

Do The Right Thing (1989; Spike Lee, director)

January 27

Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, "Of Love Possessed" and "The Metropolis" from *Commonwealth**

James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic*
(March 1982)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>

Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City" from *The Practice of Everyday Life**

Short paper due 1/30 by 5:00 PM.

The Urban Crisis: "Law and Order," Race, Class and Real Estate

February 3

The Ferguson Commission Report (excerpts)*

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (excerpts)*

Ronald Porambo, *No Cause for Indictment* (excerpts)*

James Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village"*

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic* (June 2014)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Film in class:

NBC News, *Summer of 67* (1967 television special)

February 10

FIELD TRIP: Old North St. Louis/St. Louis Place/Pruitt-Igoe site. Meet at Givens Hall.

Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder*, p. 1-103

Jacob Riis, *How The Other Half Lives* (excerpt)*

Civic League of St. Louis, *Housing Conditions in St. Louis* (1908)*

Paper #1 Due.

Producing the Ghetto

February 17

Camilo Jose Vergara, *The New American Ghetto* (excerpts)*

Mitchell Duneier, *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea*, p. 1-138

Guest speaker: Jasmine Mahmoud, Postdoctoral Fellow in Inequality and Identity, American Culture Studies

February 24

Duneier, *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea*, p. 139-238

Film In Class:

Doin' It In the Park (2012; Bobbito Garcia and Kevin Couliou, directors)

Guest speaker: Lyndon Barrois, Jr., artist

Perceiving the Condition of the City: Decline, Depletion and Rightsizing

March 3

FIELD TRIP: Botanical Heights. Meet at Givens Hall. Guests to meet in the field: TBA.

Keller Easterling, *Subtraction*

Harland Bartholomew, *A City Plan for East St. Louis* (1920)*

Allan Mallach and Lavea Brachman, *Regenerating America's Legacy Cities* *

Colin Gordon, "Blighting the Way: Urban Renewal, Economic Development and the Elusive Definition of Blight," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 31.2 (2003)*

Ordering the City: Infrastructure

March 10

FIELD TRIP: Downtown: Lucas Park and 22nd Street Interchange. Meet at Givens Hall. Guest guide: Micah Stanek.

Eric Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway* (excerpt)*

City Plan Commission, *A Major Streets Plan for St. Louis* (1917)*

Carl Smith, *The Plan of Chicago* (excerpt)*

Tom Avermaete, "Accommodating the Afropolis: Michel Ecochard's Alternative Approach to the Modern City," *Informalize! Essays of Political Economy and Urban Form* (Berlin: The Ruby Press, 2012)*

Paper #2 Due.

SPRING BREAK – No Class on March 17

Hegemony Versus Autonomy

March 24

Roberta Brandes Gratz, *The Battle for Gotham* (excerpt)*

Jane Jacobs, "The Generators of Diversity," *The Life and Death of Great American Cities**

Hillary Ballon, *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York* (excerpt)*

Raoul Vaneigem and Attila Kotanyi, "Basic Program of the Bureau of Unitary Urbanism"

<http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/raoul-vaneigem-attila-kotanyi-basic-program-of-the-bureau-of-unitary-urbanism>

Film in class:

Jane Jacobs Versus Robert Moses: The Urban Fight of the Century

March 31

FIELD TRIP: Cherokee Street. Meet at Givens Hall. Guest guide: Anne McCullough.

Richard W. Thomas, "The Black Community Building Process in Post-Urban Disorder Detroit"*

Jane Jacobs, "Gradual Money and Cataclysmic Money," *The Life and Death of Great American Cities**

Sharon Zukin, *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Spaces*, p. 1-63.

The Dialectic of Gentrification

April 7

Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (excerpt)*

Sharon Zukin, *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Spaces*, p. 63-122

Film in class:

Flag Wars (2003; Linda Goode Bryant and Laura Poitras, directors)

Paper #3 Due.

April 14

Zukin, *Naked City*, p. 122-246

Barbara Laker, "A crumbling block drowning in debt," *Philadelphia Daily News* (September 17, 2015).

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/A_crumbling_block_drowning_in_debt.html

Anna Clark, "The Threat to Detroit's Rebound Isn't Crime or the Economy, It's the Mortgage Industry," *Next City* (December 7, 2015)

<https://nextcity.org/features/view/detroit-bankruptcy-revival-crime-economy-mortgage-loans-redlining>

Paper #4 Due.

Disordering the City: Capital and Revolt

April 21

FIELD TRIP: CORTEX. Meet in class for discussion then travel. Guest guide: TBA.

David Harvey, *Rebel Cities*

Lyndon and Garcia, *Tactical Urbanism* (excerpt)*

James C. Scott, "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups" from *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts**

*Counterpoints: Stories and Data for Resisting Displacement**

April 28

Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder*, p. 107-198

Workshop on Final Projects

Guest speaker: Chinyere Oteh, Cowry Collective (cowrycollective.org).

May 5

Final Review during class period.

May 10

Final projects due to instructor by 5:00 PM.