

City 229: Comparative Urbanism – Global Ex-Urbia

Bryn Mawr College Spring 2006 MW 1-2:30 Taylor F

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Hours: Tu 10:30-12:30, W 10:30-12

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GOALS: The central premise of Comparative Urbanism as an annual introductory course is that any sense of what *the city* is must be informed by detailed knowledge of *multiple cities*, lest we generalize from limited and biased experiences. This class explores distinctive historical, political-economic, spatial and cultural experiences of global urbanism to develop awareness of resources available for comparative research, the paradigms within which we might use them, the functional limits on our investigations and their value. Through reading, active discussion and original research, you will construct an original paper, 18-25 pages in length, comparing aspects of our primary topic in two of the cities we have studied (a substitution may be made with special permission).

The topic this year is “suburbia.” Starting with experiences and narratives in Anglo-American history and culture (taken as the “type” cases of suburbia), we will think critically about what it means to live “outside” the city. For U.S. cases, the class draws on materials from both an older industrial city/region (Philadelphia and its suburbs) and a newer metropolis with a different suburban morphology – Los Angeles. To develop a comparative understanding, we look at materials drawn from the Paris region, from Buenos Aires, and from Hong Kong and the burgeoning Pearl River Delta. Our goal is not to test the American model or to draw simple contrasts, but to think about how and why suburbs fit into the processes that create and recreate cities. Are suburbs new? Can they be understood without reference to urban processes of capital, categorization or culture? Do suburbs participate in changing metropolitan regions that shape the potentials of cities and countryside – whether patterns of redevelopment, consumption or fear? In the end, we hope that by starting outside cities, we will work back into the heart of cities and the issues they raise.

Class readings and discussion provide a basic framework of history, form, political-economic questions, society, culture, representation and action – any of which you may choose to develop in depth in your longer paper. Through the term, building on our discussions of cases, theory and policy, each of you will construct a research paper in stages, in a creative but cogent fashion. The result should reflect your development of specific knowledge, general background and analytical skills. This is also a class in writing -- analyzing sources, framing comparison, and composing an argument that is well-illustrated, convincing and clear. Individual projects during the term will build toward this goal, as will engagement in class readings and TA-run activities.

TEXTS: Four primary texts are available in the bookstore:

Auyero, Javier (2000) *Poor People's Politics*. Durham: Duke.

Charef, Mehdi (1989) *Tea in the Harem*. London: Serpent's Tail.

Clapson, Marc (2003) *Suburban Century*. London: Berg.

McDonogh, Gary and Cindy Wong (2005) *Global Hong Kong*. New York:

Routledge.

All other readings (*) will be on reserve on Blackboard by week; pages are included when there is more than one reading or only part of the selection is to be read. Additional resources, including the full texts of major sources, some videos and materials like *The Hong Kong Report* and *Other Hong Kong Report* will also be placed on reserve in Carpenter.

EVALUATION: Evaluation will be based on (1) class participation, which includes your first paper proposal (25%); (2) an advanced statement of argument, outline and annotated bibliography due in week 7 (25%); (3) a rough draft of 10-15 pages due in week 11 (25%); and (4) a final paper due in week 14 (25%). You will also be asked to do an ungraded oral report on your paper in the final weeks of the term. To elaborate:

1. **CLASS PARTICIPATION** (25%). This includes general attendance, preparedness and informed participation in class. Even if you do not finish all assignments, you should look at them and know what is in them. You should ALWAYS be prepared to speak on some readings in class. Included in this general grade is your first paper (3-5 pages), which should discuss a comparative theme for your longer paper and the case materials that you hope to use. It should be based on class readings and initial research. **DUE 5 PM FRIDAY, FEB 3.**

2. **ADVANCED STATEMENT** (25%) A 5-8 page presentation of the problem you will work on during the term. In addition, present a rough outline (1-2 pp.) and an annotated bibliography of at least eight sources, four of which may be class readings (note what kind of information you have found and what you might need). Topics may be changed later in the course, although serious changes may be problematic. **DUE BY 5 PM FRIDAY, MARCH 3.**

3. **DRAFT** (25%) While this should read as if it were a completed paper in terms of style and notes, it also should serve as a first draft for your research paper. That is, it should set forth issues from class and your own reading which you are exploring in your research papers in a clear introduction, several cases (which may be from one of your comparison cities), maps or illustrations and a cogent conclusion with as complete a bibliography as possible. We expect 10-12 pages. This is a draft in the sense that it will be reused but it should not be sloppy: writing should be clear and polished and thinking coherent. **DUE BY 5 PM FRIDAY, MARCH 31.**

4. **FINAL PAPER** (25%) A polished original research paper of 18-25 pages, excluding charts and bibliography. This paper should reincorporate previous work with changes. Superior work on this paper may raise the overall average. **DUE BY 5 PM FRIDAY, APRIL 28. Papers will be returned with comment/discussion in Exam week.**

TOPICS AND READINGS BY WEEK

SECTION I: THE MEANINGS OF EXURBIA

Week 1 (January 16-18) Myths, Questions, Challenges – Why ‘Burbs?

M: Introduction: Visions and Stories of Suburbia

W: Global Myths and Narratives of Lands outside the City

READINGS: Look at as Many as Possible:

Charef, 7-16

Auyero, 1-28

McDonogh and Wong, Intro & 1-32

*Gutierrez

Week 2 (January 23-25) Meeting our Cases. Looking for the Meanings of the Euro-American Suburbs

M: Anglo-American Utopias: Visions of a Better Life

READINGS: Clapson 1-21

*Howard

*Fishman
*Keats

W: Capital, Space and the French Metropolis
READINGS: Charef 16-52
*Maspero (I)
*Wacquant
*Ferney

Week 3 (January 30-February 1) Exurbia outside the North

M: Squatters and Citizens: Buenos Aires
READINGS: Auyero 28-79
*Sargent
*Scobie

W: Colonizers and Chinatowns: Hong Kong
READINGS: McDonogh and Wong 1-88
*Bristow 1-15, 29-24
*HK Lab

Initial Paper Proposal (3-5pp) due Friday, February 3, 5 PM in the Cities Office (Thomas 235).

SECTION II: STUDYING PROCESSES OF EX-URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Week 4 (February 6-8) How do We Really Know Exurbia?

M: Experience and Ethnography
READINGS: Charef 52-90
Auyero 205-217
*Gans xi-xxix
*Myers 21-36

W: Visual Resources: Architecture and Mass Media
READINGS: McDonogh and Wong 189-197
*Jenkins
*P. Bloom or *Douglas and Malti-Douglas
*Spigel
*Nacher and Zemour
Supplementary: *Price 125-140

Week 5 (February 13-15) Suburban Growth in History

M: Walled Cities and Borderlands
READINGS: *Merriman
*Stilgoe
*Contosta
* Hayes 1-15, 46-60

Engels, *City Reader*

W: Transportation and the Extending City

READINGS: Clapson 21-50

*Scobie 13-69

*Hyde

*Green

Week 6 (February 20-22) Modernity, Affordability, Development & Control

M: Modernism, New Developments and Growth

READINGS: Clapson 143-168

*Maspero 135-153

*Sargent

*Wigglesworth

*Gans 3-21

W: Squatters and Control

READINGS: Auyero (Catch-up and review) 80-118

*Smart

*Chavez

*Bristow 231-245, 247-255

*Powell

Week 7 (February 27-March 1) Global Ex-Urbia Today: Models and Challenges

M: Rethinking Suburbs Today: Lights, Speed, Nature

READINGS: McDonogh and Wong 89-129

*McClung

*Davis

*Campanella

*Bess

W: Globalism and Transnationalism

READINGS: McDonogh and Wong 199-232

Clapson 114-124.

*Fong or *Horton

*Smart and Smart

Be prepared to give a title and framework for your project in class.

Advanced Statement due by 5 PM in Cities Office Friday, March 3

BREAK !!!

SECTION III: CONTEMPORARY ACTION AND DIVISIONS

Week 8 (March 13-15) Metropolitan Political Economics

M: Larger Economic Spaces and Development

READINGS: *Scott 163-179
 *Sargent 105-134
 *McDonogh and Wong 131-166
 *Harvey 125-164

W: Politics of Suburban Incorporation and Distance

READINGS: Auyero 119-152
 Clapson 69-90
 *Sau
 *Klein
 French Materials TBA

Week 9 (March 20-22) Consumption and Control

M: We Are Where We Buy

READINGS: *Rowe
 *HK Lab
 *McDonogh and Wong article

W: What are the Limits?

READINGS: *Cohen
 *Chu
 *Daniels
 *Mackenzie

Week 10 (March 27-29) Social Divisions on a Metropolitan Scale

M: Race and Class

READINGS: Auyero 152-182
 Clapson 79-106
 *Jarjowsky
 *Wiese
 Finish Charef if you have not already done so.

W: Gender and Age

READINGS: Clapson 125-143
 *Lloyd-Sherlock 105-132 (Supplementary 132-170)
 *N. Bloom 208-240
 *Spigel
 *Kan

Week 11 (April 3-5) Cultures of the Suburbs: Creativity and Difference

M: Culture, Beliefs, and Institutions

READINGS: Clapson 107-114
 *Myers 277-288
 *Foster
 *Eder

W: Creating “Communities”

READINGS: Auyero 183-204

*N. Bloom, 117-152

*Baumgartner, 72-100

*Perin 63-105

* Celebration TBA

Paper Draft (10-12 pp. + bibliography) due in Cities Office by 5 PM March 31

SECTION IV: REACHING CONCLUSIONS

Weeks 12-13 (April 10-12, 17-19) Presentations

Week 14 (April 24-26) Rethinking and Reusing Ex-suburbia

READINGS FOR THE WEEK (with additional possibilities emerging from presentations and class discussion:

Clapson 191-199

*Martinson

*Hayden

*New Urbanism TBA

ALL PAPERS DUE BY FRIDAY, APRIL 28. INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WILL BE SCHEDULED DURING EXAMS TO RETURN ALL PAPERS WITH COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION IF SCHEDULES PERMIT