

History 227

LIVING IN THE CITY

Fall 2018

MWF 10:10-11, ASC 505

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Description: A gateway course to international urban history. Rather than a strict chronological survey, this course approaches urban history via case studies, the scrutiny of primary material, and the discussion of key themes (justice, health, worship, spectacle and entertainment, individual freedoms, city planning, and beauty).

HUB: historical consciousness, global citizenship and intercultural literacy, teamwork/collaboration

The city provides a lens for investigating the human search for the *good* and the *beautiful* across time and space. How have people sought to achieve just societies while living in dense groups? How have their concepts of architectural beauty, for example, changed over time? We will discuss cities not only as catalysts for growth and invention, but also as generators of social problems that can lead to the absence of the *good* and the *beautiful*, or even their destruction.

The longer-term aims of the course are: to prepare you to think creatively about shaping the cities of the future; to ask how knowledge of the past may help us to make better choices on issues like the following. Do cities have environmental advantages? Are urbanization and the shrinkage of rural areas inevitable? Should cities become more dense or more sprawling? How can cities bridge social, political, cultural differences to become more inclusive and fair? The urban, as well as the natural, environment is in need of our care and attention.

Evaluation: Your grade will be determined by five assessments over the course of the term: 1. a mid-term examination on **Oct. 26**; 2. a 5 page summary of what you have learned from the course due **Dec. 10**; 3. class participation; 4. an oral Powerpoint presentation (working in groups on an issue drawn from chapters in LeGates) whose group-text you will submit for grading; over the course of the term I will assign interim due dates for the individual parts of this project: topic, outline, evidence; argument/objectives; and 5. a final examination on **Dec. 12**. Each of these assessments will constitute 20% of your grade.

Hub Outcomes: historical consciousness, global citizenship and intercultural literacy, teamwork/collaboration

Electronic devices: You may not use them in the classroom without the permission of the instructor.

Plagiarism: is dealt with according to the guidelines set out in the Boston University handbook.

We will abide by the CAS Academic Conduct Code:
<https://www.bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct>

Attendance: Please forewarn me if you must miss class. More than three absences over the course of the term will result in a lower grade.

Books: the two required texts for this course are available for purchase at Barnes and Noble. They are the **Sixth Edition** of **The City Reader**, edited by Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout (Routledge, 2011) and Andrew Lees, **The City, A World History** (Oxford, 2015). All other readings have been scanned so they are available through Mugar Library. Occasionally additional short documents will be distributed in class.

Note that changes may sometimes be made to the below syllabus.

INTRODUCTION

Sept 5: *Welcome*: how urban are you? What is your dream city and why? What is your relationship to the city?

Sept. 7: *What is a city? A deceptively simple question*: Lewis Mumford "What is a city?" in LeGates, pp. 110-114; Kingsley Davis, "The Urbanization of the Human Population" in LeGates, pp. 19-29.

Sept. 10: *The Right to the City and Gentrification, a radical perspective*: Sharon Zukin, "Whose Culture? Whose City?" in LeGates (3d edition), pp. 136-46 (scanned); David Harvey, "The Right to the City," in LeGates, 270-8.

Sept. 12: *Design Outdoors*: Ali Madanipour, "Social Exclusion and Space," pp. 203-11, and Jan Gehl, "Three Kinds of Outdoor Activities," "Life between buildings," and "Outdoor activities and the quality of outdoor space," in LeGates, pp. 608-17. (Short film clip from "Urbanized")

THE PRE-MODERN CITY

Sept. 14: *The First Cities and the Temple (referring to Uruk, Téotihuacan, Great Zimbabwe)*: V. Gordon Childe, "The Urban Revolution," in LeGates, pp. 30-8; Lees, ch. 1; selections from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Sept. 16 (Sunday): Report-back hour in my Beacon Hill apartment 3-4 pm (with cake) of your self-guided walking tour of Boston

Sept. 17: *The Greek polis: Athens 500-400 BC and the importance of public space*: Aristotle, "Politics," pp. 249-58 and H.D.F. Kitto, "The Polis," pp. 39-44 in LeGates; Pericles, *Funeral Oration*

Sept. 19: *Rome 50-100 AD: What gave the city cohesion?*: Lees, ch. 2; Mary Beard, *SPQR*, chapter 9 (scanned)

Sept. 21: *Medieval Cities: a stage for the monarch and the church (case studies of Notre Dame and Lincoln cathedrals)*: Mark Girouard, *Cities and People, A Social and Architectural History*, chapter 3 "Church and State" (pp. 41-66, scanned); Lees, ch. 3.

Sept. 24: *Medieval Cities: their need for walls, a Muslim case study (Fez and Marrakech)*: Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City: historic myths, Islamic essence, and contemporary relevance," pp. 172-80 in 3d edition of LeGates (scanned); Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, (selections)

Sept. 26: *Istanbul in its Golden Age*: Peter Clark, *Istanbul, A Cultural History* (2012), Chapter 3 to p. 86 (scanned); Lady Mary Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters* (handout).

Sept. 28: *Early Modern Cities and the birth of capitalism*: Lees, ch 4

Oct. 1: *Early Modern London, and Fire!* Roy Porter, *London: a social history* (1994), "Tudor London" pp. 34-65, scanned; 'Voices from Early Modern London: Pepys, Young, Defoe' (handout)

THE INDUSTRIAL ERA

Oct. 3: *The Industrial Revolution: the big picture*: Lees, ch. 5. (Recommended: Hohenberg and Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000-1994*, "Human Consequences of the Industrial Revolution," chapter 8, pp. 248-289 (online access).)

Oct. 5: NO CLASS

Oct. 9: *"The Insensate Industrial Town" (mid-19th century Manchester and Glasgow)*: Friedrich Engels, "The Great Towns," in LeGates, pp. 53-62; poetry of William Blake and William Wordsworth (handout). Photography from *Thomas Annan, Photographer of Glasgow*, by A. Maddox and S. Stevenson (projected images).

Oct. 10: *London (late 19th century): Crime, Poverty, and the Suburban Escape*: Ebenezer Howard, "Author's introduction" and "The Town-Country Magnet" in LeGates, pp. 371-8. Recommended: Judith Flanders, *The Victorian City: Everyday Life in Dickens' London*.

Oct. 12: *Paris before Haussmann*: Patrice Higonnet, *Paris, Capital of the World*, chapter 4, "Mysterious Capital of Crime" pp. 75-94, scanned. Baudelaire, "The Little Old Women" (handout)

Oct. 15: *Paris after Haussmann 1850-70: The Creation of Grand Boulevards and the Monumental City of Light*: Mark Girouard, Cities and People, chapter 14, "Paris and the Boulevards," pp. 285-300, scanned; Robert Moses, "What happened to Haussmann?" Architectural Forum 77, 1 (1942), pp. 57-77 (scanned). Emile Zola, "Au Bonheur des Dames" excerpt (handout).

Oct. 17: *Paris: the culture of urban protest and street politics*: Mark Traugott, The Insurgent Barricade, pp. 1-21 (available online).

Oct. 19: 17. *The Imperial City, at home and abroad: London (1)*: Jonathan Schneer, London 1900 The Imperial Metropolis, ch 2 pp. 16-36 (scanned); Lees, ch. 6.

Oct. 22: 18. *Johannesburg and segregation (2)*: Bill Freund, The African City, "Cities in revolt: the long-term crisis of South African urbanism," chapter 4, scanned.

Oct. 24: 19. *The Casbah and the Colon: Algiers (3)*: Zeynep Celik, Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations, ch. 1 (scanned)

Oct. 26: MIDTERM EXAM

Oct. 29: *Casablanca (4): modernity in North Africa*: Gwendolyn Wright, The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism, "Morocco: modernization and preservation," chapter 3, pp. 85-160, scanned.

Oct. 31: *Istanbul (5): a post-imperial metropole remembers*: Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul, Memories and the City*, chapters 4 – 6/pp. 26-61 (scanned).

Nov. 2: *St. Petersburg/Petrograd/Leningrad: A City on the Brink 1703-1945*. Andrei Bely, *Petersburg* (selections), Lidiya Ginzburg, *Blockade Diary* (selections), Pushkin, *The Bronze Horseman*.

Nov. 5: *New York and the Skyscraper*: Clarence Perry, "The neighborhood unit," in LeGates pp. 563-75; Lees, ch. 7.

Nov. 7: *Post-World War Two Planning: Moses vs. Jacobs*: Le Corbusier, "A contemporary city," pp. 379-87 in LeGates; and Jane Jacobs, "The uses of sidewalks" in LeGates, pp. 149-53; Lees, chapter 8.

Nov. 9: *The automobile: LA and the city as freeway*: Michael Dear, "The Los Angeles School of Urbanism: an intellectual history," pp. 187-92 in LeGates, and Mike Davis, "Fortress L.A." in LeGates pp. 121-17

Nov. 12: *Public space revisited: the park*: "Public parks and the enlargement of towns," Frederick Law Olmstead in LeGates, pp. 364-70; William H. Whyte, "The Design of Spaces," in LeGates, pp. 587-95; Camillo Sitte, "Author's introduction," "The relationship between buildings, monuments, and public squares," and "The enclosed character of the public square," in LeGates, pp. 474-85. (5th ed, available online)

THE FUTURE OF THE CITY

Nov. 14: *Does historic preservation matter?:* Guest visit by Prof. Daniel Bluestone; reading to be assigned by Prof. Bluestone

Nov. 16: film

Nov. 19: *New cities in China:* Tingwei Zhang, "Chinese cities in a global society," in LeGates, pp. 687-95; Yu, Shuishan. "Redefining the Axis of Beijing: Revolution and Nostalgia in the Planning of the PRC Capital." *Journal of Urban History* 34.4 (May 2008): 571-608.

Nov. 26: *Decay?* Elijah Anderson, "The code of the street" and "Decent and Street families," in LeGates, pp. 131-38, and Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling alone: America's declining social capital," in LeGates, pp. 154-62

Nov. 28: *Race and the American City:* William Julius Wilson, "From institutional to jobless ghettos," in LeGates, pp. 117-26; W.E.B. Dubois, "Negro Problems," "Earning a Living," and "Color Prejudice," in Le Gates; Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June, 2014 (online).

Nov. 30: *Lagos, the informal city:* Neil Brenner and Roger Keil, "From global cities to globalized urbanization," in LeGates, pp. 666-76; George Packer, "The Megacity," *The New Yorker* (13 Nov., 2006; online).

APPLICATIONS/THE FUTURE

Dec. 3: *Money, Money, Money and What does 'sustainable' really mean?* Myron Orfield, "Metropolitcs and Fiscal Equity" in LeGates p. 338-56, Wilbur Thompson, "The city as a distorted price system" in LeGates p. 305-13, Peter Calthorpe, "Urbanism in the age of climate change," in LeGates p. 511-24, and Owen, "Green Manhattan," in LeGates p. 414-22.

Dec. 5: Student presentations, group 1

Dec. 7: Student presentations, group 2

Dec. 10: Summing up: five page essay due (summing up what you've learned in this course) to discuss in class

Dec. 12: Final examination