Urban Cultures Summer II 2012  
Anthropology 345C (82140)  
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Office Hours (SAC 4.158): Mon.10:30-11:30 am; Wed. 1:00-2:00

Overview: The city is one of humanity’s most profound and unwieldy inventions. This course surveys the culture of cities, exploring their historical development and their current dynamism. Our perspective will encompass the great global cities as well as major urban areas in the United States. We will frame the urban experience from a number of perspectives, examining the distinctive forms of expressive culture, ethnic and racial conflict, and political or economic activity that cities generate. Students will gain an understanding of the profound impact of new technologies, immigration, and gentrification on how cities grow and decline. We will consider each of these dimensions of urban experience from a cultural perspective, which focuses on how people create meaningful lives.

Dynamics: Through lectures, readings, and films, students will acquire an informed perspective on urbanism and be introduced to the methods and theories that anthropologists rely upon in analyzing urban settings. Lectures will frame the numerous dimensions that inform city life, while presenting students with a means of thinking synthetically about these complex interrelations. The readings feature a range of disciplinary perspectives on the culture of cities, but we will also develop a sustained attention to the work of urban ethnographers. Daily films will offer vivid, engaging depictions of particular dynamics related to city life. Two in-class exams will test your comprehension of basic dynamics, key concepts, and critical historical developments related to urbanism. The paper assignment involves applying critical perspectives developed in this course to a particular city that interests you. Discussions will be geared towards clarifying texts and grappling with the insights and issues raised in readings and films—attendance is a requirement of this course. WARNING: This syllabus is not a contract; reading assignments and topics are subject to change, reflecting the general pace of student/instructor progress in this class.

Grading and Course Requirements:  
1) Two exams (each worth approximately 40% of your grade).  
2) Class participation (approximately 20% of your grade), which involves attendance, writing one-paragraph summaries of films, and engaging in class discussions of the readings.

Required Texts:  
*On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture*, Setha Low  
*Triumph of the City*, Edward Glaeser  
*Parable of the Sower*, Octavia Butler  
*Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos*, and the Neoliberal City, Arlene Davila.
Class Schedule:

WEEK ONE:
July 9: Introduction.
Film: *Barcelona Blueprint*.
July 10: Glimpsing the texture of cities:
Film: *The Nature of Cities*.
July 11: Origins of Cities
Readings: *On the Plaza*, chp.3
Film: *Rome: Impact of an Idea*.
July 12: Urban Design, pt. 1: Grids and plazas
Readings: *On the Plaza*, chp.4-5
Film: *City Living*.

WEEK TWO:
July 16: Industrial City, pt. 1: European origins
Readings: Engles, “Working Class Manchester.”
Film: *Material World*.
July 17: Industrial City, pt. 2 Segregation and the inner city
Readings: *The Triumph*, Chps. 3-5 “Poverty and Inequality” Katz; Warner, “The Segregated City.”
Film: *Requiem for Detroit*.
July 18: The Post Industrial City
Readings: Harvey, “Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition.” *The Triumph*, Chp. 6
Film: *Paris Ring* and *Cities on Speed: Mumbai—traffic*.
July 19: Urban Ethnography
Film: *The Wire*.

WEEK THREE:
July 23: 1ST EXAM.
July 24: Urban Government
Film: *The Garden*.
July 25: Homeowners Association
Readings: “Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation,” Caleira,
Film: *Lagos/Koolhaas*.
July 26: Reading the Urban
Readings: Stevenson, “Meaning and Memory: Reading the Urban Text.”
Film: *Living the hiplife*. 
WEEK FOUR:

July 30: Representing the City:
Readings: Stevenson, “Imagining the City: Movies, Maps, and Cyberspace,”
Film: Liquid City.
July 31: Disneyfication of the urban
Readings: Culture of Cities, Chp.1 & 2
Film: The Gods of Times Square.
August 1: Shopping in the City:
Readings: Culture of Cities, Chp. 5 & 6
Film: Malls R Us.
August 2: Gentrification.
Film: Flag Wars.

WEEK FIVE:

August 6: Grasping Public Culture
Readings: Barrio Dreams, Chps 4-6.
Film: To Be Seen.
August 7: Grasping Public Culture
Readings: On the Plaza, chps.6-8 & 11.
Film:
August 8: Changing Racial Landscapes.
Readings: The Triumph, Chps. 10-13
Film: Thirsty Planet.
August 9: Dystopia or Utopia?
Readings: Butler, Parable of the Sower.
Film: The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill.