

URBDP 565A
AMERICAN URBAN HISTORY
Autumn 2007

Instructor: Manish Chalana, Dept. of Urban Design and Planning

Meeting time: Th 3-5:50pm

Meeting place: Gould 208J

Credits: 3

Format: Graduate seminar

Course Website: <http://faculty.washington.edu/chalana/urbdp565>

Instructor contact info: 410 Gould, chalana@u.washington.edu, 206-616-6051

Office hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course is designed as an intensive graduate-level seminar in American Urban History. Its purpose is to provide students with the opportunity for immersion in historical scholarship that addresses the social, economic, political, technological, and cultural forces that have shaped the development of American cities. As a seminar, this course emphasizes reading and discussion as the primary modes of learning. To promote engagement with the course and content, students will be actively involved by taking turns as presenters and discussion leaders.

Required readings

Core Textbook

Chudacoff, Howard A. and Judith E. Smith. The Evolution of American Urban Society. Upper Saddle River, NJ. Prentice Hall, 2000.

Course Readings

Bender, Thomas. Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in 19th-Century America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Chauncey, George. Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of a Gay Male World, 1890-1940. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.

Goings, Kenneth and Raymond Mohl, eds. The New African-American Urban History. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1996.

Jackson, Kenneth T. Crabgrass Frontier : the Suburbanization of the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Schuyler, David. The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1988

Spain, Daphne. How Women Saved the City. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Thrush, Coll. Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 2007.

Wade, Richard. The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. 1996.

Warner, Sam Bass. Streetcar Suburbs: the Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Copies of these books are available for purchase at the UW Bookstore, and held at the Architecture Library on the third floor of Gould Hall.

Course Organization

The class meets on Thursdays. The first part of the class would be centered on a discussion of the core text, led by the instructor. After a short break, in the second half discussions would be led by students, and will focus on the books. Teams of class members, on a rotating basis, will be responsible for making presentations on the books and leading the discussion sessions on them. Needless to say, everyone is required to read the books in preparation for the discussion sessions.

Seminar requirements

Requirements for a **seminar-style course** are rather straightforward: do the readings, show up, pay attention, and engage in discussion that is rooted in the readings. Look for emerging patterns among and between the works we cover from week to week. And don't be afraid to ask questions.

Book Presentations

You will be expected to participate in leading discussions of TWO books during the quarter as a member of the team, with shared responsibilities and prepare—in writing—the following:

- 1) intellectual biography for the author
- 2) explaining how the book was received
- 3) contextualizing the book in contemporary scholarship on the topic
- 4) outline of the book
- 5) critique of the contents including thesis, research method and writing style
- 6) discussion themes/questions

You will make these presentations in teams with other class members. This means reading the book thoroughly, meeting in advance with other team members, and preparing a group presentation lasting no more than 20 minutes total that helps the rest of the class to understand the topics covered in the book. You may want to discuss it in advance with the

instructor, to get some feedback on your approach and to build confidence in your planned presentation.

One critical form of preparation is to locate published and online criticism of the work that gives you a sense of how it has been received by reviewers. Your responsibility is to bring the class to a shared understanding of the kinds of sources and research methods used by the author, the arguments and evidence presented in the works, and its overall contribution to the field of American urban history.

When it is your turn to make a presentation on the book, you will:

- develop a written book report covering all areas of the assignment, and make a hand-out for the class at the start of the class session.
- send the discussion themes/questions to the class by Monday, 11: 59pm before the Thursday meeting.
- make a power point presentation, then help to facilitate the discussion that follows.

During the discussion section, facilitators' roles involve a number of objectives:

- ensuring that discussion probes into the major critical issues raised by the reading in relation to the knowledge and experience of the group
- ensuring that discussion does not wander repeatedly into unproductive territory while still allowing for spontaneous exploration
- ensuring that dialogue remains respectful while still allowing for critical disagreement
- ensuring that all voices are heard

E-Discussions

The class website has discussion boards set up for each of the books used in this course. You should use these to post your comments on the topics covered in the books as well as respond to already posted comments to generate a meaningful discussion. The instructor will be reading your comments carefully each week to determine the quality of participation. You are responsible for participating in at least two discussion boards during the course of the quarter to get full class participation credit.

Final Paper

You will write an original research paper applying any of the themes of American urban history that we have been discussing in class to the case of Seattle. A more detailed description of the assignment is available on the course webpage. Due dates:

01 Nov: midterm draft
08 Nov: peer review one draft
10 Dec: bound (color) hardcopy in 410 Gould, and electronic pdf on assigned collect area
 on the course website

Grading

Book Project:	30% (15% each)
Research Paper:	50%; 20% (midterm) draft paper, 05% Peer review of one draft paper, and 25% final paper
Class Participation:	20%; 15; in-class participation, 5% e-discussions

Deadlines

Deadlines are VITAL. Late submissions are not accepted. Standard exceptions for major medical situations apply; such situations should be discussed with the instructor.

Other policies

This class is of course governed by all of the university's student policies, including those on plagiarism and multiple submissions. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these. More information can be found at: <http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm>

Other resources for American Urban History

The Architecture Library on the third floor of Gould Hall holds an extensive collection of scholarly works on American urban history. You may also wish to explore some online resources. The major online discussion list for those in the field of Urban History is H-urban, a link to which is provided on the course webpage. I suggest that you join this list, if only for the quarter, as it is a critical source of information on the subject.

In addition there are innumerable web sites devoted to various aspects of urban history and you may wish to visit some of them. Flagship periodicals in the field include the *Journal of Urban History*, and the *Journal of Planning History*, where you will find current scholarship as well as reviews of recent publications. Scholarly meetings include the Urban History Association and the Society for American City and Regional Planning History, which meet regularly.