

URB 8020 GLOBAL URBAN TRAJECTORIES: THE RE-MAKING OF CITIES

[syllabus subject to revision]

Spring 2022

Tuesdays, 12:45-3:15, Sparks Hall | Room 306

Instructor: Prof. Jan Nijman

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Office hrs. by appointment

This course concentrates on a series of well-known and iconic urban (re)development projects in cities around the world, at different times, and it includes a studio module on Atlanta. Some of the projects relate to redevelopment of urban cores or inner ring suburbs; these are typically defined as urban renewal or regeneration. Others refer to planned new developments on the urban periphery that typically involve urban expansion. They all entail major interventions in the urban landscape, officially intended to meet challenges to a city's overall development and progress. The focus is mostly on discrete projects that consist of local, physical, planning interventions rather than long-term national or local development programs or policies (such as HOPE VI, or inclusionary zoning). Examples of projects covered in this course include the 'Hausmannization' of Paris, the creation of New York's Central Park, Chicago's public housing projects of the mid-20th century, and slum rehabilitation strategies in present-day Mumbai.

The course aims at a broad understanding of urban (re)development projects as a window into the workings of cities. It is not intended as practical training for planners or to delve into the intricacies of the planning process, development finance or technical measurements of economic or environmental impacts. Rather, it is to better understand the scope, intentions, organization, and general outcomes of such projects: why they are pursued, by whom, for whom, at what cost, and with what impacts on the urban landscape and on different populations. As such, the course shines a light on the nature of power and planning in cities across varying historical-geographical contexts. The various projects also illustrate how cities are at once objects of planning *and* develop according to a dynamic of their own, with possibly unintended outcomes; and they reflect how stated goals don't necessarily correspond to the agendas of individual stakeholders. While the course has a concrete focus on specific projects and on the praxis of the re-making of cities as it affects infrastructure, housing, public space, etc., it is broadly informed by an urban political economy perspective. It is framed in theoretical terms around the notions of urban growth machines, the production of space, and the right to the city.

Learning objectives:

- To gain knowledge and understanding of the significance of major urban (re)development projects in the evolution and planning of cities;
- To acquire knowledge of a selected number of high-profile cases of urban (re)development projects in the US and abroad, and to appreciate their historical-geographical context;
- To be able to critically consider (re)development projects within the broader urban political economy and in terms of their origins, rationale, goals, organization, and outcomes;
- To enhance skills in critical reading, writing, analysis, class discussion, and presentation.

The course is set up as a seminar. It is intended for master's students and open to PhD students. Advanced undergraduates will need permission from the instructor. The key to a successful seminar lies in thorough preparation and active participation. Students are expected to read assignments critically and to come to class ready for discussion.

Testing and grading

Course grades are determined on the basis of class participation (32%), studio work (20%), and 6 weekly written statements (8% each).

- Class participation: attendance and constructive participation in class discussion. Excused absences require the instructor's approval.
- Studio work: 15% for the written report and 5% for the presentation. The last three weeks of the course comprise a studio assignment where students work in teams of three persons to study, analyze and present on past or present urban redevelopment projects in Atlanta (e.g., Techwood Homes, the Olympics, Beltline, Stitch, etc.). Students are expected to contribute equally to their team's project. This research assignment should be based on secondary sources: existing reports, documentation, and data. It should focus on the idea, rationale, context, and ramifications for different populations and geographies.
- 6 weekly statements: reports that briefly (600-800 words) summarize and critically appraise the readings. The first report for all students pertains to assigned readings for Week 2. Subsequently, students will each select five more weeks of readings from Week 3-10. Weekly reports must be submitted via email to [jniyman@gsu.edu](mailto:jnijman@gsu.edu) by 8pm on the night before class meets. Late submissions will not be graded and receive a score of zero.

Students will be assigned a letter grade from the University letter scale: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the University's Policy on Academic Honesty. GSU guidelines on academic honesty/dishonesty will be enforced. The guidelines are posted at <http://education.gsu.edu/files/2016/05/plagiarism.pdf> and <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/files/2013/2014-2015-Section-II-Academic-Conduct-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>. Penalties can range from receiving no credit for an assignment/exam up to expulsion from the university.

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to arrive on time and actively participate in class discussion. Simply showing up is not cause for a strong grade. If you are unable to attend class, please email me ahead of time with a reason. I will determine if the absence will count as excused. In general, regular employment is not considered as an excused absence.

COVID absences

The Office of the Dean of Students provides Absence Notifications upon request for students seeking an excused absence related to documented medical/health or emergency situations. This

process helps protect confidential documents, while providing additional support for students and professors. Final decisions about absences and coursework/exam management are determined by individual professors following established institutional/college/departmental guidelines.

See: <https://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/student-assistance/#professor>.

Students with Disabilities

If you need accommodation for a disability, please register with the GSU Office of Disability Services (in-person or online). You will be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan, and then you are responsible for emailing the copy of that plan to me and faculty of all the classes in which you need accommodations. Students should provide a copy of the Plan to the instructor within the first two weeks of classes. To register for accommodations please follow this link disability.gsu.edu/services/how-to-register. Phone: (404) 413-1560, Email: dismail@gsu.edu, Website: disability.gsu.edu.

Remote Academic Coaching. The Office of Disability Services also offers free remote academic coaching. To learn more go to disability.gsu.edu/services or watch a [Coaching Video](#)

Veterans & Serving Military

Students who are veterans, serving in the military, their dependents, and the survivors of serving military are encouraged to avail themselves of a range of college services and activities through the Military Outreach Center (MOC). For assistance or guidance while attending GSU on campus or online, contact the Atlanta Campus Military Student Advocate, David Garcia, at 404-413-2331. Be sure and let me know ASAP if or when there is any possibility of you being activated and deployed. For more information contact the GSU Military Outreach Center. Phone: (404) 413-233, Email: dgarcia9@gsu.edu Website: veterans.gsu.edu.

Basic Needs Statement: Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide resources that we may possess. The [Embark program at GSU](#) provides resources for students facing homelessness.

TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

[* indicates reading will be made available by instructor]

Week 1, January 11: Introduction: the re-making of cities and urban theory
Beauregard, R. (1990). Bringing the city back in. *JAPA* 56/2: 210-215.

Fainstein, S. (2005). Planning theory and the city. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 25: 121-130.

Week 2, January 18: Conceptualizing urban (re)development

Harvey, D. (2008). The right to the city. *New Left Review* 53: 23-40.

*John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch (1987), "The City as a Growth Machine." In: *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. U of California Press, pp. 50-98.

Hyra, D.S. (2012). Conceptualizing the new urban renewal: Comparing the past to the present. *Urban Affairs Review*. 2012;48(4):498-527. doi:[10.1177/1078087411434905](https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087411434905)

Week 3, January 25: Amsterdam's Canal District

UNESCO (2010). Seventeenth-Century Canal Ring Area of Amsterdam.

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1349/>

*Shorto, R. (2020). Designing the world's most liberal city. In: J. Nijman (ed.), *Amsterdam's Canal District: Origins, Evolution, and Future Prospects*. Pp. 43-56.

*Furnée, J.H. & Lesger, C. (2020). Bourgeois homes: Elite spaces of the Canal District, 1600-1910. In: J. Nijman (ed.), *Amsterdam's Canal District: Origins, Evolution, and Future Prospects*. Pp. 81-99.

*M. Girouard (1985). "Amsterdam and Paris" in M. Girouard, *Cities & People: A Social and Architectural History*. New Haven: Yale UP. Pp. 151-180.

Week 4, February 1: 'Hausmannization' of Paris

Chapman, B. (1953). Baron Haussmann and the Planning of Paris. *The Town Planning Review* 24/3: 177-192.

Thompson, V.E. (1997). Urban renovation, moral regeneration: Domesticating the Halles in Second-Empire Paris. *French Historical Studies* 20/1: 87-109.

Paccoud, A. (2016). Planning law, power, and practice: Haussmann in Paris (1853-1870). *Planning Perspectives* 31/3: 341-361.

Also see articles by Harvey (2008) and Girouard (1985), above.

Week 5, February 8: New York's Central Park

Fisher, C. (2011). Nature in the city: Urban environmental history and Central Park. *OAH Magazine of History* 25/4: 27-31.

Crompton, J.L. (2020). A review of the economic data emanating from the development of Central Park and its influence on the construction of early urban parks in the United States. *Journal of Planning History* 20/2: 134-156.

Sevilla-Buitrago, A. (2014). Central Park against the streets: the enclosure of public space cultures in mid-nineteenth century New York. *Social and Cultural Geography* 15/2: 151-171.

Sutton, P.C. & Anderson, S.J. (2016). Holistic valuation of urban ecosystem services in New York City's Central Park. *Ecosystem Services* 19: 87-91.

The lost neighborhood under New York's Central Park. *VOX documentary*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdsWYOZ8iqM>

Week 6, February 15: Chicago's public housing projects

Vale, L. (2012). Housing Chicago: Cabrini-Green to Parkside of Old Town. *Places*, February 2012. <https://placesjournal.org/article/housing-chicago-cabrini-green-to-parkside-of-old-town/>

Hunt, D.B. (2001). What went wrong with public housing in Chicago? A history of the Robert Taylor homes. *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94/1: 96-123.

Vale, L. & Freemark, Y. (2012). From public housing to public-private housing: 75 years of American social experimentation. *JAPA* 78/4: 379-402.

*Bennett, L & Reed, A. Jr. (1999). The new face of urban renewal: The Near North Redevelopment Initiative and the Cabrini-Green neighborhood. In: A. Reed (ed.), *Without Justice for All: The New Liberalism and Our Retreat from Racial Equality*. NY: Routledge, Pp. 175-211.

[Recommended viewing: *Goin' to Chicago*, documentary film by George King. Atlanta, 1994.]

Week 7, February 22: Levittown

Gans, H.J. (1967). *The Levittowners: Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community*. Foreword by Molotch and Chapters 1 and 2. Pp. ix-xvii, 3-43. Columbia UP, 2017 ed.

Birkner, M.J. (2002). Much to like about Levittown. *Journal of Planning History* 1/4: 325-330.

Williamson, J. (2005). Retrofitting 'Levittown.' *Places* 17/2: 46-51.

Marshall C. (2015). Levittown, the prototypical American suburb. *The Guardian*, 5-28-2015.

Laskey, J. (2018). Levittown, NY: The original starter community. *New York Times*, 12-19 2018.

March 1: no class (AAG meetings)

Week 8, March 8: Highways and the American city

Bromley, R. (1998). Not so simple! Caro, Moses, and the impact of the Cross-Bronx Expressway. *Bronx County Historical Society Journal* 35/1: 4-29.

Weingroff, R.F. (2000). The genie in the bottle: The interstate system and urban problems, 1939-1957. *Public Roads* 64/2. USDOT Federal Highway Administration.

<https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/septoct-2000/genie-bottle-interstate-system-and-urban-problems-1939-1957>

Stromberg, J. (2016). Highways gutted American cities. So why did they build them? *Vox*, May 11, 2016. <https://www.vox.com/2015/5/14/8605917/highways-interstate-cities-history>

Givens, D. (2017). Atlanta's Interstates: destruction of city fabric in the 1950s, mobility woes today. <https://daringivens.medium.com/atlantas-interstates-destruction-of-city-fabric-in-the-1950s-mobility-woes-today-4882b4ec6830>

Kruse, K.M. (2019). What does a traffic jam in Atlanta have to do with segregation? Quite a lot. *The New York Times*, August 14, 2019.

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/traffic-atlanta-segregation.html>

March 15: no class (Spring break)

Week 9, March 22: London Docklands

Butler, T. (2007). Re-urbanizing London Docklands: Gentrification, Suburbanization or New Urbanism? *IJURR* 31/4: 759-781.

Brownill, S. (2010). London Docklands revisited: The dynamics of waterfront development. In: G. Desfor et al (eds.), *Transforming Urban Waterfronts: Fixity and Flow*. NY: Routledge. Pp. 121-142.

Week 10, March 29: Mumbai slum rehabilitation

Nijman, J. (2008). Against the odds: Slum rehabilitation in neoliberal Mumbai. *Cities* 25: 75-87.

Nijman, J. (2015). India's urban future: Views from the slum. *American Behavioral Scientist* 59/3: 406-423.

Bardhan, R. et al (2015). Mumbai slums since Independence: Evaluating the policy outcomes. *Habitat International* 50: 1-11.

Week 11, April 5: Research assignments

Final topic selections and team formations.

Guidelines:

- Past or present urban (re-)development project in Greater Atlanta;
- Clear division of labor among team members.
- Written report, to be submitted by 8pm on April 17 via email, and in-class presentation on April 19. Reports should be ~4000-5000 words plus illustrations and bibliography. Use references and attribute citations. Presentations will be about 30 minutes, followed by Q&A.
- Focus should be on project's: (1) historical-geographical context; (2) rationale; (3) organization and execution; (4) stakeholders and involved interests; (5) funding; (6) contemporary (and ex post facto) public debate; (7) economic, environmental, and social impacts. It is fine to include references to comparable projects beyond Atlanta. Throughout, it will be helpful to consider the questions WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO, and WHY. The WHY question is especially important, as it will beg to explain why this project happened and how it offers a window into the working of the city.

Week 12, April 12: Progress reports

Teams report on project progress and challenges.

Week 13, April 19: Project presentations