**The United States Metropolis, 1945-2000**

URBN 1200

MWF

11-11:50

CIT165

Professor Samuel Zipp

[samuel\_zipp@brown.edu](mailto:szipp@uci.edu)

Office: 82 Waterman, Room 205

Office Hours: Monday 3-5

TA: Robyn Schroeder

This lecture and discussion course will provide students with an introduction to the history, politics, and culture of United States cities and suburbs from the end of World War II to the close of the twentieth century. Readings are drawn from recent work in the political, social, and cultural history of U.S. cities as well as primary sources rooted in the period under study.

Students will be asked to analyze the interconnections between urban and suburban development, the social and political movements that arise from urban change and look to direct it, and the cultural forms and representations that have emerged as symbolic interpretations of urban and suburban experience. Lectures, readings and discussions will also stress the role of ideology, class, gender, and race in shaping urban and suburban policy, culture, politics, and the built environment.

Topics will include: wartime mobilization, suburbanization, urban renewal, Civil Rights, the effects of migrations of black and white Southerners, the “urban crisis” and the rise of the Sunbelt, suburbanization and the growth of conservatism, the emergence of the regional city and the “edge city,” and new immigration and globalization.

## Required Readings:

Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America*

Becky Nicolaides and Andrew Wiese, eds., *The Suburb Reader*

Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*

Alexander von Hoffman, *House by House, Block by Block: The Rebirth of America’s Urban Neighborhoods*

Books are at the Brown University Bookstore and on reserve at The Rock.

(Recommended: Jon Teaford, *The Metropolitan Revolution: The Rise of Post-Urban America* [on reserve at The Rock.])

**The pieces indicated with an (X) in the syllabus below will be available on the Canvas site. Look for them listed by the author’s last name.**

**Required Films:**

*The City*, dir. Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke (1939)

*A Raisin in the Sun*, dir. Daniel Petrie (1961)

*Bunker Hill, 1965*, dir. Kent MacKenzie (1956)

*Bunker Hill: A Tale of Urban Renewal*, dir. Greg Kimble (2009)

*The Landlord*, dir. Hal Ashby (1970)

*The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, dir. Nunnally Johnson (1956)

*Killer of Sheep*, dir. Charles Burnett (1977)

*La Ciudad*, dir. David Riker (1998)

*Safe*, dir. Todd Haynes (1995)

*Falling Down*, dir. Joel Schumacher (1993)

**Films can be individually screened through the EReserves section of the Canvas page for this class (Password: “metropolis”) or screened at Media Services in person. Please make sure to watch the film *before* the Friday discussion section in the week it is assigned.**

**Course Requirements and Grading**

Midterm

1. Midterm. The midterm will consist of short answer IDs and an essay drawn from your readings and my lectures. **20 percent** of your grade.
2. Two short papers. Details to be distributed in class. The first will be due in week 6, the second in week 11. **20 percent each, for a total of 40 percent**.
3. Final Exam. The final will consist of an in-class exam of IDs and essays. **30 percent**.
4. Attendance and participation. Attendance is mandatory at all sessions. **10 percent**.

**Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Presentations**

**Generally, lectures are Monday and Wednesday and discussions are Friday, except where noted.**

**UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, THE READING AND VIEWING FOR EACH WEEK SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY YOUR DISCUSSION SECTION ON FRIDAY.**

# **Week 1—1/22-1/24**

**Introductions**

(You should begin reading Lemann, “Clarksdale” and “Chicago,” pp. 1-107)

# **Week 2—1/27-1/31**

**M: The Rise of the American City I**

Watch:*The City*, dir. Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke (43 min.) (Also available online.)

**W: The Rise of the American City II**

**F: World War II and the Great Migration**

Reading: Sugrue, Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1 (xv-xxvii; 3-31)

Lemann, “Clarksdale” and “Chicago” (1-107)

Watch: *A Raisin in the Sun*, dir. Daniel Petrie (128 min.)

Recommended: Teaford, “Introduction” and “1945” in *The Metropolitan Revolution* (1-48) [Reserve]

# **Week 3—2/3-2/7**

**Planning the Postwar City: Public Housing and Urban Renewal**

(SECTIONS BEGIN THIS FRIDAY, February 7th)

# Reading: Sugrue, Chapters 2 and 3 (33-88)

Alison Isenberg, “’The Demolition of Our Outworn Past’: Suburban Shoppers and the Logic of Urban Renewal” (X)

Watch: *Bunker Hill, 1965* (17 min.) and *Bunker Hill: A Tale of Urban Renewal* (22 min.)

# Recommended: Teaford, “Reinforcing The Status Quo” (49-89)

# **Week 4—2/10-2/14**

**Deindustrialization and The Rise of the Sunbelt**

Reading: Sugrue, Part Two (Skim 91-124, Read 125-178)

Lemann, begin “Washington” (109-222)

# **Week 5—2/17-2/21**

**(NO CLASS** Monday February 17th)

**The Great Society and The Urban Crisis**

Reading: Sugrue, Part Three and Conclusion (179-271)

Lemann, finish “Washington” and “Chicago” (223-306)

Recommended: Teaford, “The Debacle” (125-164) [Reserve]

# **Week 6—2/24-2/28**

**The Sitcom Suburbs**

Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, pages 225-290

Recommended: Teaford, “Coming Apart” (90-124) [Reserve]

**PAPER #1 DUE WEDNESDAY 2/26 IN CLASS**

# **Week 7—3/3-3/7**

**Gender and Cold War in the Culture of the Suburbs**

Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, 291-321

Lizabeth Cohen, “Reconfiguring Community Marketplaces” (X)

Watch: *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, dir. Nunnally Johnson (153 min.)

# **Week 8—3/10-3/14**

**Suburbs, Race, and the New Metropolitan Order**

### MIDTERM IN CLASS, Wednesday, March 12th

Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, 321-378

Raymond Mohl, “Stop the Road: Freeway Revolts in American Cities” (X)

# **Week 9—3/17-3/21**

### Suburban Politics: The Fall of Liberalism, the Rise of Conservatism

Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, 379-408

**SPRING BREAK**

## Week 10—3/31-4/4

**Comeback Cities?**

Reading: Von Hoffman, *House By House, Block by Block*, 1-76, 111-158, 251-256

Suleiman Osman, “The Decade of the Neighborhood” (X)

Watch: *The Landlord*, dir. Hal Ashby (112 min.)

# **Week 11—4/7-4/11**

### A Post-Suburban *and* Post-Urban Society?

## Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, 409-438

Von Hoffman, 207-250

Watch: *La Ciudad*, dir. David Riker (1998)

## Recommended: Teaford, “Beyond the Black White City,” 165-238

**PAPER #2 DUE WEDNESDAY 4/9 IN CLASS**

**Week 12—4/14-4/18**

**Los Angeles: City of the Global Millennium?**

Reading: Edward Soja and Allen J. Scott, “Introduction to Los Angeles, City and Region” (X)

Edward W. Soja, “Los Angeles, 1965-1992” (X)

Mike Davis, “Fortress L.A.” (X)

Watch: *Killer of Sheep*, dir. Charles Burnett (83 min.) and/or *Falling Down*, dir. Joel Schumacher (113 min.)

**Week 13—4/21-4/25**

**SprawlWorld**

## Reading: Nicolaides and Wiese, 439-498

Watch: *Safe*, dir. Todd Haynes (119 min.)

Recommended: Teaford, “After The Revolution,” 239-262

## Final Exam: Wednesday May 14th, 2:00PM

**Course Policies:**

*Attendance*: Prompt and regular attendance is mandatory. Students who miss classes run the risk of receiving a failing grade or receiving a lower grade than those who attend all classes. Excused absences must be documented by a doctor's note, a note from the Dean, or advance notice from the Athletic Director. Absences for religious observances are excused; please let me or your TA know of dates in advance. Unexcused absences will result in the subtraction of points from your participation grade.

*Classroom Environment*: Feel free to ask questions and express opinions in this course, and to approach readings and ideas actively and critically. As you do so, however, please strive to be courteous to your fellow students. In order to create a respectful and productive environment please avoid unnecessary distractions during class meetings. **Please turn off your cell phones or other electronic devices before coming to class. FINALLY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, BEGINNING IN WEEK 2, COMPUTERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN CLASS.** Please come prepared to take notes on paper.

*Discussion Sections:* You are expected to have completed the day's readings **prior to coming to class** and to be prepared to participate in discussions. ***Always bring the texts we will be discussing to class.***

*Papers:* All work written outside the classroom must be typed or word-processed in a standard 10 or 12 point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. All quotations must be cited with parenthetical references, footnotes, or endnotes. All papers should have your name, the course title and number, the due date, and an appropriate title or label for the assignment at the top. **ALL PAPERS SHOULD BE PAGE NUMBERED.** I strongly recommend that you keep copies of all your work, either on paper or digitally, for your protection.

Your work will be evaluated for earnest effort and thoughtful, coherent content. Remember to clearly state your thesis and support your arguments with examples. I also expect that you will proofread your work before handing it in. Unclear writing and excessive grammatical errors will reduce your grade. Electronic submission of papers is not allowed unless otherwise noted. If you know you are going to miss an assignment due date you must be proactive and request an extension in advance. Late assignments will lose points for each calendar day late and will not be accepted more than one week past their due date without a previously agreed upon extension.

*Plagiarism & Academic Integrity*: Students in this class will be held to a high standard of academic integrity, which is defined as "the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. If I suspect all or part of an assignment may not be your own intellectual work I may ask to see your notes or drafts. I also may require electronic submission of the paper to facilitate running the paper through plagiarism-detecting databases. Plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the entire course or even more serious disciplinary action by the Dean of the College. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please talk with me, I am happy to talk it over before there is a problem.