

The Unruly City

Instructor: Michael Allen
Spring 2016 | LAND/MUD/ARCH 530B

Instructor Contact Information: 314.920.5680 | McMillan 245 | allen.m@wustl.edu
Office hours by appointment; meeting immediately following class possible.

The history of the American city is the history of conquering the “unruly”: real estate parcels, neighborhoods, buildings, and even people that represent decay, obstacles to capital, unlawfulness or disorder. Designers denigrated unruliness in the pursuit of modernization in the 20th century, but today seem more conflicted on the constitution and remedies for disorder. What disrupts urban life more, the broken windows of vacant houses or the arrival of Whole Foods in a poor neighborhood? Neighborhoods that have lost most of their population, or new football stadiums offered as economic and architectural solutions to blight?

Programs of urban right-sizing, urban agriculture, police reform, historic preservation and mass transportation have operative impacts that both squelch and protect the “unruly.” Contemporary debates draw on a key historic conflict from 1950s New York City: the public debate over planning impresario Robert Moses’ never-built Lower Manhattan Expressway project, which would have destroyed parts of SoHo and other neighborhoods, which ignited the opposition of activist and critic Jane Jacobs, author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. What seemed like stark ideological opposition has become more complicated, as Moses’ commitment to public works fell to the trend of privatizing urban space, and Jacobs’ theories influenced a generation of preservationists and urban planners whose practices inscribe new forms of sometimes-disruptive order on neighborhoods.

This course examines competing conceptions of the form and desirability of disorder in American cities, and ends with the creation of design proposals for selected sites in St. Louis that present variants on the conditions of disorder.

Readings

Many readings will be scanned and distributed throughout the semester. However, students are encouraged to purchase copies of these books:

- Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1970)
- David Harvey, *Rebel Cities* (London, Verso, 2012)
- Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012)
- Keller Easterling, *Subtraction* (New York: Sternberg Press, 2014)

Other required readings are accessible on Blackboard (<http://bb.wustl.edu>) or will be distributed in class.

Required Work

Assigned Papers	50%
Final Project	30%
Attendance and Participation in Discussion	20%

Field Trips

All field trips will occur during class time.

Response Papers and Maps

There will be a short paper assigned on the first session due the second session. This paper will be 2-3 pages and will be graded pass/fail. This paper starts the flow of essay-thinking for the semester and will respond to the first session's themes.

There will be four assigned papers that will frame responses to the readings and site visits. These papers shall be 5-7 pages long. The prompts for the papers will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard, since course activity will influence the exact questions for each paper.

Additionally, students will make maps of selected sites visited documenting historic elements, landscapes present, population and other factors. These maps will spatialize the intersection of course themes with field work.

If any student needs an extension on one of these assignments, s/he should ask for one at the start of the class *before* which the paper is due. One extension will be granted, but only if it is requested according to the requirement listed on this syllabus. Late assignments will lose 3 points for each day they are not submitted. Email is an appropriate way of submitting a paper, and will be counted the same as paper submission.

Final Project

The final project will consist of a research and design project based on a site in St. Louis. The project will include a 12-15 page paper that analyzes a site through the framework of one of the thematic units of the course, utilizing course readings to make comparative studies of related sites in other American or even global cities. The paper will examine the constitution of order and disorder in the space. Students will then create proposed interventions for the sites that pose conservation or renewal programs that foster sustainable futures for the sites. The exact prompt will be distributed no later than week 10 of the course. The projects will be presented during the final week of the course, with guest critics present.

Academic Integrity

Needless to say, you are responsible for adhering to the university's academic integrity policies

(for a full articulation of them, see <http://studentconduct.wustl.edu/integrity/policy>). In particular, you are expected to produce your own work, to avoid inappropriate collaboration (especially on the written assignments), and to avoid various other forms of academic dishonesty, including falsification of data and misrepresentation of sources.

Failure to cite and formally acknowledge your sources constitutes plagiarism, and will result in a failing grade (and likely disciplinary action within the bounds of Washington University's usual policies). You should produce work that is *very clear* in its acknowledgement of others' work – not only quoted material, but ideas and language as well. This is a standard of quality research that you are expected to meet. *When in doubt, cite!*

Citations and Formatting

All work for the course should use the Chicago Style of documentation (footnoting of each source each time you quote, paraphrase, summarize or otherwise reference it – see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html or other such sources for guidance). Please use an 11-point font, double space your work, and provide page numbers.

Schedule

Defining Disorder

January 22

Introductions

Film viewing in class:

Charlie LeDuff Golfs the Length of Detroit (2012)

Clip from *Koyaanisqatsi* (1983)

Flag Wars (2003)

January 29

James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic* (March 1982)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>

Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, "Of Love Possessed" and "The Metropolis" from *Commonwealth* (2009) – posted on Blackboard

Mitchell Schwarzer, "Past St. Louis," *Harvard Design Magazine* 16 (2002) – posted on Blackboard

Short paper due.

The Urban Crisis

February 5

The Ferguson Commission Report

<http://forwardthroughferguson.org/report/executive-summary/>

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (excerpts) – posted on Blackboard

Ronald Porambo, *No Cause for Indictment* (excerpts) – posted on Blackboard

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” *The Atlantic* (June 2014)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

February 12

Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder*

Paper #1 Due.

The Condition of the City: Housing and Neighborhoods

February 19

FIELD TRIP: Old North St. Louis/St. Louis Place/Pruitt-Igoe site. Meet at Givens Hall. Travel in teams.

Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder*

Camilo Jose Vergara, *The New American Ghetto* (excerpts) – posted on Blackboard

Jacob Riis, *How The Other Half Lives* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Civic League of St. Louis, *Housing Conditions in St. Louis* (1908) – posted on Blackboard

Jill Desimini, “The Multiply Or Subdivide: Futures of a Modern Urban Woodland,” *Scenario Journal* (Spring 2014)

<http://scenariojournal.com/article/to-multiply-or-subdivide/>

Recommended film:

The Pruitt-Igoe Myth (2011)

The Condition of the City: Decline, Depletion and Rightsizing

February 26

FIELD TRIP: East St. Louis. Meet at Givens. Travel in groups.

Keller Easterling, *Subtraction*

Harland Bartholomew, *A City Plan for East St. Louis* (1920) – posted on Blackboard

Allan Mallach and Lavea Brachman, *Regenerating America’s Legacy Cities*

https://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/2215_Regenerating-America-s-Legacy-Cities

Ordering the City: Planning and Infrastructure

March 4

Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City" from *The Practice of Everyday Life* – posted on Blackboard

Carl Smith, *The Plan of Chicago* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Tom Avermaete, "Accommodating the Afropolis: Michel Ecochard's Alternative Approach to the Modern City," *Informalize! Essays of Political Economy and Urban Form* (Berlin: The Ruby Press, 2012) – posted on Blackboard

Guest speaker at start of class: Ruth Keenoy, historic preservationist

March 11

FIELD TRIP: Gateway Arch/Gravois Avenue. Meet at Old Courthouse, east steps.

Eric Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Harland Bartholomew, *A Traffic Plan for St. Louis* (1926) – posted on Blackboard

Hillary Ballon, *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Helene Lipstadt, "Co-Making the Modern Monument: The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Competition & Saarinen's Gateway Arch" – posted on Blackboard

Paper #2 Due.

SPRING BREAK – No class March 18

Spaces of Order, Spaces of Disorder

March 25

Roberta Brandes Gratz, *The Battle for Gotham* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Film in class:

Jane Jacobs Versus Robert Moses: The Urban Fight of the Century

April 1

FIELD TRIP: Botanical Heights. Meet at Givens Hall. Travel in teams.

Richard W. Thomas, "The Black Community Building Process in Post-Urban Disorder Detroit" – posted on Blackboard

Jane Jacobs, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Guests we will meet in the field: Sarah Gibson and Brent Crittenden, UIC

The Dialectic of Neighborhood Renewal

April 8

Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn*

Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (excerpt) – posted on Blackboard

Guest speakers at start of class: Alderwoman Cara Spencer (D-20th)
Alderman Chris Carter (D-27th)

Paper #3 Due.

April 15

Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn*

Barbara Laker, "A crumbling block drowning in debt," *Philadelphia Daily News* (September 17, 2015).

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/A_crumbling_block_drowning_in_debt.html

Emily Washington, "Historic preservation: bad for neighborhood diversity," *Market Urbanism* (September 4, 2014).

<http://marketurbanism.com/2014/09/04/historic-preservation-bad-for-neighborhood-diversity/>

Anna Clark, "The Threat to Detroit's Rebound Isn't Crime or the Economy, It's the Mortgage Industry," *Next City* (December 7, 2015)

<https://nextcity.org/features/view/detroit-bankruptcy-revival-crime-economy-mortgage-loans-redlining>

Guest speaker at start of class: Tori Abernathy, Portland Renters Assembly co-founder (toriabernathy.com)

April 22

Site Visits and Final Project Preparations.

Guest speaker at start of class: Regina Martinez, Pink House

Paper #4 Due.

Disordering the City: Capital and Revolt

April 29

FIELD TRIP: CORTEX. Meet in class for discussion then travel in teams.

David Harvey, *Rebel Cities*

Lyndon and Garcia, *Tactical Urbanism* – excerpt posted on Blackboard

James C. Scott, “The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups” -- posted on Blackboard

Guest speaker: Dan Peterson, CIC St. Louis

May 6

Presentations/critiques of final project.

May 9

Final projects due to instructor by 5:00 PM.