

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service
New York University

URPL-GP 2660 (001)
History and Theory of Planning

Fall 2011
Monday 4:55 - 6:35 p.m.
19 Washington Square North
Saadiyat Room

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Office Hours: After class & by appointment

This course examines key ideas in the history and theory of planning. The syllabus is organized in part as a great books course. We will read a series of classic books in the history and theory of planning—planning broadly defined as a social enterprise, not only as a professional pursuit. You are expected to read the texts closely, grapple with the ideas they advocate, and discuss them in class, which will operate as a seminar driven by your participation in lively and informed conversation.

Fundamental social and political issues animate the history and theory of planning. One urban historian defined planning as “collective action for the public good concentrated on ... shaping the shared physical infrastructure for present needs and future growth.” Consider the questions that arise from these keywords—collective action, public good, present needs, future growth. In American society, planning as a form of collective action comes up against the strong claims of individualism and private property; how are these conflicting values reconciled? How does planning differ in societies where the claims of individualism and private property may vary from US norms? What is the public good and who defines it? How are current needs determined and whose needs are prioritized? Growth targets depend on a vision of the good society. Toward what ends should growth be directed, and how are those goals advanced?

The course is organized in three parts: current challenges, great books, and techniques of planning. We start with some challenges of 21st-century urbanism to activate our conversations about the history of planning. Does the historical and theoretical apparatus of planning equip us to deal with 21st-century urban formations and problems? Are the forms of contemporary urbanism categorically different from those of the past? Are the techniques and methods of planning bound to the American context, or are they also suitable for other social and political contexts? Part Two focuses on major thinkers whose ideas are relevant to the history and theory of planning, including: Le Corbusier on the modernist, functional city; Jane Jacobs on pedestrian-centered urbanism; Ian McHarg on environmental planning; and Rem Koolhaas on generic urbanism. Part Three concerns the techniques of planning on which professional claims of expertise have been grounded. Our topics include: data surveys and the construction of planning as a social science; zoning; building codes; advocacy planning; and GIS.

Requirements: Weekly reading
Active and informed participation in discussion
1 written response, 1-2 pages
Guided Class Discussion with essay, 4 pages
1 Paper, 6 pages: due December 16

Readings: Readings are on reserve or available as an electronic resource. Some paperback books, which are assigned in their entirety or in large part, have been ordered at the NYU Bookstore. They are listed below in the order they appear on the syllabus; an asterisk (*) in the weekly outline indicates the book can be purchased at the bookstore. The books have been ordered for your convenience, and you are not obliged to purchase them.

Davis, Mike. *Planet of Slums*.

Le Corbusier. *The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning*.

Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

Fogelson, Robert M. *Bourgeois Nightmares. Suburbia, 1870-1930*.

Ben-Joseph, Eran. *The Code of the City*.

Guided Class Discussion and Essay: You will choose a class to lead with a colleague. The three of us will meet at least one week before the class to prepare for it; please contact Leigh Watts (leigh.watts@nyu.edu) to schedule that appointment. When we meet, please bring discussion questions around which you think class should be organized. We will finalize the questions together, then you will circulate the questions to your classmates for their consideration as they complete the reading assignments. At the end of your week, please submit an individually authored essay of 4 pages that elaborates on one of the discussion points you raised. I seek a close reading and analysis of a specific dimension of the text, not a broad overview.

Final Paper: A final paper of approximately 6 pages is due December 16. Please see the separate description of this assignment.

Grading: $\frac{1}{3}$ Class Participation
 $\frac{1}{3}$ Guided Class Discussion and Short Essay
 $\frac{1}{3}$ Final Paper

Weekly Outline

A Scheduling Note: It may be necessary for me to cancel a class, sometimes at short notice, in order to travel to Abu Dhabi. If a class is cancelled, it will be rescheduled.

Part 1. Introduction

1. September 12

A Short History of Master Planning in the US, touching on Washington, D.C, the 1811 Plan of New York, the Burnham Plan of Chicago, The Regional Plan of New York of 1929, and Robert Moses

No reading is required for this class.

Related Reading: Ballon, Hilary, ed. *The Greatest Grid: The Master Plan for Manhattan, 1811-2011*. N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 2011 [forthcoming].

Burnham, Daniel, and Edward Bennett, *Plan of Chicago*. Chicago, 1909; reprint N.Y., 1993.

Online version: www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/10417.html.

Fishman, Robert. "The Metropolitan Tradition in American Planning," in Robert Fishman, ed., *The American Planning Tradition. Culture and Policy*. Washington, D.C./Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, pp. 65-85.

Fishman, Robert. "The Regional Plan and the Transformation of the Industrial Metropolis," in *The Landscape of Modernity. Essays on New York City, 1900-1940*, ed. David Ward and Olivier Zunz. N.Y., 1992, 106-25.

Ballon, Hilary, and Kenneth T. Jackson, eds. *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*. N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 2007.

2. September 19

Exploding Cities

Read: Soja, Edward, and Miguel Kanai. "The Urbanization of the World," in Ricky Burdett and Deyan Sudjic, eds., *The Endless City, The Urban Age Project* by the London School of Economics and Deutsche Bank's Alfred Herrhausen Society. New York/London: Phaidon, 2007, pp. 54-69.

Marshall, Richard. "Asian Megacities," in Edward Robbins and Rodolphe El-Khoury, eds., *Shaping the City. Studies in History, Theory and Urban Design*. New York: Routledge, 2004, pp. 194-211.

(*) Davis, Mike. *Planet of Slums*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007 (orig. pub. 2006). Chaps. 1-2, 6-7.

Further Reading: Neuwirth, Robert. *Shadow Cities. A Billion Squatters, A New Urban World*. New York/London: Routledge, 2006.

Part 2. Icons

3. September 26

The Modernist City: Le Corbusier

Read: (*) Le Corbusier. *The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning* (translation of *Urbanisme* [Paris, 1924]) New York: Dover, 1987.

October 10 NYU HOLIDAY

4. October 3

The Street Ballet: Jane Jacobs

Read: (*) Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Knopf/Doubleday, 1992 (orig. pub., 1961). Parts 1-2 & Chap. 15.

5. October 17

Ecology: Ian McHarg

Read: McHarg, Ian L. "Man and Environment (1963)," in *The Essential Ian McHarg. Writings on Design and Nature*, ed. By Frederick R. Steiner. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2006, pp. 1-14.

McHarg, Ian L. *Design with Nature*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1992 (orig. pub. 1969). "A Response to Values," "Processes as Values."

6. October 24

The Generic City: Rem Koolhaas

Read: Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City (1994)," in Office of for Metropolitan Architecture Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL. Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large*. New York: Monacelli Press, 1995, pp. 1238-64.

Harvard Project on the City, "PRD Pearl River Delta," in Rem Koolhaas, et al, eds., *Mutations*. Barcelona: ACTAR, 2000, pp. 280-225.

7. October 31

The Regional City: Peter Calthorpe

Read: Calthorpe, Peter, and William Fulton. *The Regional City. Planning for the End of Sprawl*. Washington, D.C. : Island Press, 2001. Parts 1-2, and either Chap. 6, 7 or 8.

Part 3. Techniques of Planning

8. November 7

Expertise: Planning as a Social Science

Read: John D. Fairfield, *The Mysteries of the Great City. The Politics of Urban Design 1877-1937* (Columbus, Ohio, 1993). Chap. 3, "From Rapid Transit to City Planning: Social Efficiency and the New Urban Discipline," and Chap. 4, "The Professionalization of City Planning and the Scientific Management of Urban Space."

Brown, Jeffrey. "From Traffic Regulation to Limited Ways: The Effort to Build a Science of Transportation Planning," *Journal of Planning History* 5/1 (Feb. 2006), 3-34. (E-journal)

9. November 14

Zoning

Read: Revell, Keith D. "Regulating the Landscape: Real Estate Values, City Planning and the 1916 Zoning Ordinance," in David Ward and Olivier Zunz, eds., *The Landscape of Modernity. Essays on New York City*. N.Y.: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992, pp. 19-45.

Silver, Christopher. "The Racial Origins of Zoning in American Cities," in June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf, eds., *Urban Planning and the African American Community*. Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage, 1997, pp. 23-42.

(*) Fogelson, Robert M. *Bourgeois Nightmares. Suburbia, 1870-1930*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005, Chap. 2, pp. 117-200.

10. November 21

Building Codes

Read: (*) Ben-Joseph, Eran. *The Code of the City. Standards and the Hidden Language of Place Making*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005, Parts II-III, pp. 77-185.

11. November 28

Advocacy Planning and Social Equity

Read: Davidoff, Paul. "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 31/4 (1965), pp. 186-97. (E-journal)

Krumholz, Norman. "A Retrospective View of Equity Planning: Cleveland 1969-1979," *JAPA* 48/2 (Spring 1982), pp. 163-84. (E-journal)

12. December 5

Mapping and Geographical Information Systems

Read: Cosgrove, Denis. "Carto-City," in Janet Abrams and Peter Hall, eds. *Else/Where Mapping. New Cartographies of Networks and Territories*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Design Institute, 2006, pp. 148-159.

Drummond, William J., and Steven P. French, "The Future of GIS in Planning: Converging Technologies and Diverging Interests," *JAPA* 74/2 (Spring 2008), pp. 161-74. (E-journal)

Klosterman, Richard E. "Comment on Drummond and French: Another View of the Future of GIS," *JAPA* 74/2 (Spring 2008), pp. 174-76. (E-journal)

Ferreira Jr., Joseph. "Comment on Drummond and French: GIS Evolution: Are We Messed Up by Mashups?," *JAPA* 74/2 (Spring 2008), pp. 177-79. (E-journal)

13. December 12

Informal Urbanism

Read: Brillembourg, Alfredo; Kristin Feireiss; and Hubert Klumpner. *Informal City: Caracas Case*. Munich: Prestel, 2005. All of the following by Alfredo Brillembourg and Hubert Klumpner: "Introduction," pp.16-23; "Towards an Informal City," pp. 38-45; "Informal Capital," 70-77; "The Research Enterprise," pp.102-111; "The Simple and the Complex," pp.216-225; "Imagine the New City," 248-259; and "Epilogue," 270-275.

View: *Caracas: The Informal City*, a film by Urban-Think Tank, 2007. (YouTube). Also see http://u-tt.com/researchUTTFilms_Films.html.

December 16: Final Paper due.