Spring 2010 Professor Erik Harms

Department of Anthropology : 10 Sachem Street : erik.harms@yale.edu

Course Meetings:
Mondays, Wednesdays
9:00 – 10:15

WLH 203

Office Hours:
Mondays, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Or by appointment
Room 123 @ 10 Sachem

Course Description:
This course looks at urban environments as cultural landscapes of power. We read every feature, monument, building, or road in a city as a set of meaningful assertions, as choices people make about how to organize social action and how to regulate the ways that people move through and experience space and time. Where is it safe to go in an urban setting? When is it safe? For whom is it safe? We will write our way through theories about the urban experience, city maps, photo essays, short-stories, films, and our own journeys through actual urban landscapes, exploring along the way how Urban Power can be understood as the control of Space and Time. How do certain places in a city take on symbolic meaning? How do those meanings change during different times of day? What makes a city a city? Why are there no supermarkets in some neighborhoods, only liquor-stores? Why do cities invest in certain projects and let others crumble? Where are the schools, the dumps, the parks and the parking lots? Who gets "a view" and who is put under surveillance? How do these choices contribute to the forms that urban culture takes?

In your papers you will ask -- and attempt to answer -- questions like these by conducting interviews, keeping journals and writing three different kinds of academic essays. In an early 4-5 page paper, you will write *a detailed description of the spatial and temporal practices* associated with a particular place in New Haven (ie. a park, a restaurant, a café, the steps of city hall, a public library). In a 5-6 page paper, you will write *a critical survey of urban theory* in which you build from the work of other authors and add your own contributions gained from research about, and experience in, actual

urban environments. In a final essay, you will write a 10-15 page *ethnography* (a theoretical and descriptive analysis based on work with New Haven-based community organizations) about urban life in New Haven. Through course readings, you will encounter urban theories that help you think broadly about the ways that Urban Culture emerges in space and in time and as a power-laden relationship. In your writing assignments, and through participation with community organizations, you will explore the concrete particularities of this relationship as it applies to the city where you all currently live (New Haven, CT).

Course Goals and Structure:

In this course, we take advantage of the small seminar format to develop our intellectual skills as both thinkers and academic writers. We don't simply learn to write but write in order to learn. As a hands-on, practical course, improvement in student writing skills will come through the act of writing itself, and we will use class-time to prepare for writing, to write, and to comment on each others' writing. Students should also engage with the reading assignments and begin to think critically about the concept of urban life. If successful, the course should help students to think creatively about these topics and transform these thoughts into powerful essays, convincing arguments, or creative pieces that push the limits of our thinking. As an anthropology course, we will try to stand outside our own social and cultural biases and look freshly at these concepts. As a writing-based course that engages with the community, we will try to avoid the heavy weight of technical jargon and abstract concepts in order to produce quality essays that can be read across the disciplines and outside of academia.

The course work will consist of three essays, all of which will be preceded by several in-class or take-home pre-writing exercises. While most essays will be written over the course of several-week units with pre-writing exercises leading up to a final paper, the culminating essay of the course will be a guided research paper designed by the student and utilizing outside research to explore and analyze an example of urban life in the real world. This research will involve collaboration with a New Haven community organization, facilitated by Yale's student-led Community-Based Learning (CBL) program. In addition to this practical basis, research for this final project should include work using the library, but can also draw on either textual evidence or evidence gathered from outside the classroom in the form of interviews or observations. Students should be prepared to submit a brief proposal presenting their paper topics and anticipated research agenda by the time we get to week six. Drafts of these papers will be due on the next-to-last day of class, when we will engage in peer-review before handing the final paper.

Grading:

Grades will be based primarily on the written assignments (including drafts and final essays, and in-class writing assignments). The total course grade will be calculated as a percentage of accumulated points. (A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; etc.).

· As indicated in the chart below, two essays will be graded on a 100 point scale and one will be worth 200 points.

· Throughout the semester, several "low-stakes" writing assignments will be given "all or nothing points" as long as the student has completed the assignment satisfactorily.
· Attendance and classroom participation are essential to success in the course, and students who fail to attend all class meetings, or who consistently arrive late or fail to participate, will see their final course grade affected.

Major papers and their due dates are as follows:

Date Due	**Topic**	**Weight of Paper**
Feb. 10th	"Urban Description"	100 points
March 24th	"Urban Theory"	100 points
April 30th	"Urban Ethnography" and CBL Report	200 points

Note that each paper represents the culmination of several lead-up projects and assignments. The due-dates for those assignments are noted below in the course schedule and syllabus.

Course Policies:
· Students must attend all of the scheduled classes, unless excused in advance by the instructor. Students anticipating the need to miss class for religious holidays or for approved participation in University athletics should inform the instructor during the first two weeks of class.
· Students must hand in papers on time at the beginning of class on the date indicated on this syllabus. Papers should be double-spaced, using standard 12 point font, with 1 inch margins. Unexcused late papers will not receive anything higher than a "B". Students anticipating the need for an extension must forewarn the instructor at least one week in advance. On occasion, I will ask you to submit papers online using the "yaleclassesv*2" course website or via email. Papers or assignments submitted electronically should always be saved as Microsoft Word documents with standardized filenames according to the following format:

yourlastname.assignment#.doc
(ie: "harms.1a.doc")

· Unless otherwise noted, the readings indicated for a particular week should be completed by the first class meeting of the week. (Note: Readings marked with a hollow bullet point, "○", are optional).
· Don't plagiarize! Students should be familiar with Yale's policy on academic honesty:

http://www.yale.edu/yalecollege/freshmen/academics/introduction/honesty.html

And students should visit the following useful guide to citing sources at:

http://library.duke.edu/research/guides/citing/

If you have questions about citing sources or remain unclear about plagiarism, please feel free to ask me, a reference librarian in any of the Yale libraries, or staff members at the Yale College Writing Center. If you plagiarize you will fail the class.

Community-Based Learning Component:

Community-Based Learning (CBL) allows students and community organizations to work together to meet both students' academic requirements and organizations' needs. Community nonprofit and government organizations identify projects of research, analysis, or evaluation that would be helpful to them. These projects are then matched to courses at Yale. Students complete research for the community organizations which compliments coursework; in the past, the research has culminated in a paper that serves as the final project for the class and serves as a resource for the organization. The goal of the CBL project is to assist, rather than merely study the organizations, although the work that students do for the organization will be incorporated into a final research paper or project for their class.

Completing a service based research project within the rigorous academic framework provided by a class allows students a unique forum to make connections between academia and service in ways they cannot do as comprehensively through separate academic and service experiences. The combination of theory and application enhances academic life and makes CBL different from either internships and jobs or purely academic courses. The inclusion of a community based learning component brings fresh enthusiasm to the classroom, and a deeper level of intellectual engagement. Implemented properly, it has the potential to bring students and teachers closer to the material, the community, and each other.

Course Materials:

· All course readings indicated in the course schedule are available as electronic text reserves accessible online via yaleclassesv*2.

· I also encourage students to consider purchasing a writing handbook. I recommend, but do not require, a practical reference book by Diana Hacker:

-Hacker, Diana. (2003). *A Writer's Reference.* Boston: Bedford / St. Martin's.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

INTRODUCTION: URBAN CULTURE, SPACE, TIME, AND POWER

Week 1:

Course Introduction

For Wednesday, please read:

· Simmel, Georg ([1971] 1903). "The Metropolis and Mental Life". On Individuality and Social Forms. Chicago, University of Chicago Press**:** 324-339.

· Wirth, Louis (2002 [originally published in 1938, American Journal of Sociology]). "Urbanism as a Way of Life" Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City. G. a. W. P. Z. Gmelch. Long Grove, Illinois, Waveland Press**:** 65-82.

Monday, January 11th: Introduction to the Class

Wednesday, January 13th: Urban Life as a State of Mind

Friday, January 15th: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Effects

Visit Paul Rudolph's Parking Garage

Dress Warm: Class meets outside for a walk through New Haven

PART ONE: REPRESENTING URBAN LIFE

Week 2:
Planning and Power

For Monday, please read:

- Certeau, Michel de (1984). Walking in the City. The practice of everyday life. Berkeley, University of California Press**:** 91-110.
- Brook, Daniel (2007). "Annotation: Mall of America: The Architecture of Our Privatized Government." Harper's Magazine. Vol. **315**,No. 1886.July 2007**:** 62-63.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Scott, James C. (1998). Chapter 4: The High Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique. Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. New Haven, Yale University Press**:** 103-146.
- Johnson, Jenna (2007). "Google's View of D.C. Melds New and Sharp, Old and Fuzzy." The Washington Post. Sunday, July 22, 2007; C01.
- (Optional) Le Corbusier (1986 [1931]). Towards a New Architecture. New York, Dover.
- (Optional) Le Corbusier (1987 [1927]). The City of To-Morrow and its Planning. New York, Dover.
- (Optional) Holston, James (1989). Chapter Two: Blueprint Utopia. The modernist city : an anthropological critique of Brasilia. Chicago, University of Chicago Press**:** 31-58.
- (Optional) Fishman, Robert (1982). Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier. Cambridge, MIT Press.

Monday, January 18th: No Class MLK Day

Wednesday, January 20th: Maps, Satellite Views, and Legibility

Assignment 1A due.

Week 3:
Ethnographic Writing: Evoking the Urban through Description

For Monday, please read:

- Low, Setha M. (2000). "Chapter One: Notes from the Field". On the Plaza : The Politics of Public Space and Culture. Austin, University of Texas Press**:** 2-30; 127-153.

· Low, Setha M. (1996). "Spatializing Culture: The Social Production and Social Construction of Public Space in Costa Rica." American Ethnologist **23**(4): 861-879.

For Wednesday, please read:

· Mehta, Suketu (2005). "Mumbai". Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found New York, Vintage**:** 113-130.

· Bestor, Theodore (2002). "Networks, Neighborhoods, and Markets: Fieldwork in Tokyo". Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City. In Gmelch. Long Grove, Illinois, Waveland Press**:** 146-161.

Monday, January 25th: From Field-Notes to Ethnography

Assignment 1B due.

Assignment 1C conducted in class.

Wednesday, January 27th: Differentiating Ethnography and Journalism

Assignment 1D due.

Week 4:

Urban Ethnography and Representations of Space

For Monday, please read:

· Low, Setha M. (2000). "Chapter Seven: Constructing Difference". On the Plaza : The Politics of Public Space and Culture. Austin, University of Texas Press**:** 154-179.

For Wednesday, please read:

· Holston, James (1989). "Chapter Four: The Death of the Street". The modernist city : an anthropological critique of Brasilia. Chicago, University of Chicago Press**:** 101-144.

· Geertz, Clifford (1989). Toutes Directions: Reading the Signs in an Urban Sprawl. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 21(3): 291-306.

○ (Optional) Bourdieu, Pierre (2003 [1971]). "The Berber House". The Anthropology of Space and Place. S. L. a. D. Lawrence-Zuñiga. Malden, MA, Blackwell**:** 131-141.

Monday, February 1st: Space and Social Relations

Wednesday, February 3rd: Spatial Form and Function

Assignment 1E due.

Week 5:

Movement, Streets, Markets

For Monday, please read:

· Benjamin, Walter (1986). "Naples". Reflections. New York, Schocken Books**:** 163-173.

· Jacobs, Jane (1993 [1961]). "Chapter 2: The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety". The Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York, The Modern Library**:** 37-71.

For Wednesday, please read:

· Bestor, Theodore C. (2004). "Selections". *Tsukiji : the fish market at the center of the world*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Need to Copy chapters for this…

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Monday, February 8th: Movement and Meaning

Assignment 1F due.

Wednesday, February 10th: Markets as Places

Final Draft of Essay 1, due in class.

*** Film** Beckman, Peregrine (2007 [1994]). Fish Is Our Life. Watertown,MA: Documentary Educational Resources**:** Color. 28 min.

Before the end of Week six please turn in a brief, one paragraph proposal for your final paper. Proposal should include a brief description of the community organization you plan to work with, a preliminary discussion of the general research topic, a preliminary bibliography, and a description of any methods to be used in analyzing the topic. We will schedule individual meetings to discuss your final paper proposals, and any practical matters needed to carry out your work.

Week 6:
Local Reflections of Global Connections

For Monday, please read:

· Sassen, Saskia (1994). "The Urban Impact of Economic Globalization". Cities in a world economy. Thousand Oaks, CA., Pine Forge Press**:** 15-44.

· Solnit, Rebecca (2007). "Detroit Arcadia: Exploring the post-American Landscape." Harper's Magazine. Vol. **315**,No. 1886.July 2007**:** 65-73.

For Wednesday, please read:

· Bestor, Theodore (2001). "Supply-Side Sushi: Commodity, Market, and the Global City." American Anthropologist **103**(1): 76-95.

· Roseberry, William (1996). The Rise of Yuppie Coffees and the Reimagination of Class in the United States. *American Anthropologist*. 98(4): 762-775.

Monday, February 15th: Making Connections Up, Down, and Sideways

Wednesday, February 17th: Community Based Learning Session

PART TWO: SPACE, TIME, AND EXPRESIONS OF URBAN CULTURE AND POWER

Week 7:
Spatial (and Temporal) Divisions of Labor

For Monday, please read:

- Davis, Mike (1999). "The Case for Letting Malibu Burn". Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster. New York, Vintage.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Burgess, Ernest W. (2002). The Growth of the City. The Blackwell City Reader. G. a. S. W. Bridge. Malden, MA, Blackwell**:** 244-250.
- Zukin, Sharon (2002). from *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World*. The Blackwell City Reader. G. a. S. W. Bridge. Malden, MA, Blackwell**:** 197-207.
- Scott, Allen J. (2002). from *Metropolis: From the Division of Labor to Urban Form*. The Blackwell City Reader. G. a. S. W. Bridge. Malden, MA, Blackwell**:** 135-146.
  - (Optional) Fishman, Robert (1982). "Ebenezer Howard". Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier. Cambridge, MIT Press.
- (Optional) Films: *8 Mile*; *Colors*; *Boyz in the Hood*

Monday, February 22nd: Power and Division

Wednesday, February 24th: Division and Urban Form

Assignment 2A due.

Week 8:
Boundaries and Walls

For Monday, please read:

- Engels, Friedrich (1943). "Selections from". The condition of the working-class in England in 1844. London, Allen and Unwin**:** 1-74. (Precise pages tba)
- Davis, Mike (1992). "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space". Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space. M. Sorkin. New York, Hill and Wang**:** 154-180.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Caldeira, Teresa P.R. (1999). "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation". Cities and citizenship. J. Holston. Durham, N.C., Duke University Press**:** 114-138.

Monday, March 1st: Class Boundaries and Defensive Architecture

Wednesday, March 3rd: Global Trends of Fortification

Assignment 2B due.

SPRING BREAK: March 5th, 5:20 p.m -- March 22nd, 8:20 a.m.

Week 9:

Theorizing Space, Time and Power

For Monday, please read:

- Harvey, David (1990). "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination." Annals of the Association of American Geographers **80**(3): 418-434.
- Lefebvre, Henri (1991). "Selections". The Production of Space. Oxford, OX, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA, Blackwell.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Greenberg, Gary (2005). "The Condemned." Mother Jones.
- Massey, Doreen B. (1995). "Selections" from Spatial divisions of labor : social structures and the geography of production. New York, Routledge.
- Smith, Neil (1982). "Gentrification and Uneven Development." Economic Geography **58**(2): 139-155.

Monday, March 22nd: Encountering Urban Theory

Wednesday, March 24th: Spatial Divisions of Labor

Final Draft of Assignment 2 due.

Handout and discuss time-frame for Assignment 3

Week 10:

Space and Resistance

For Monday, please read:

- Caro, Robert A. (1975). “One Mile” The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York. . New York, Vintage.
- Nonini, Donald M. (1998). ""Chinese Society," Coffee-Shop Talk, Possessing Gods: The Politics of Public Space Among Diasporic Chinese in Malaysia." positions **6**(2): 339-473.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Goldstein, Daniel M. (2004). "Spectacular Violence and Citizen Security". The spectacular city : violence and performance in urban Bolivia. Durham, Duke University Press**:** 179-214.
- Desjarlais, Robert (1996). The Office of Reason: On the Politics of Language and Agency in a Shelter for 'the Homeless Mentally Ill" *American Ethnologist*. 23(4): 880-900.

Monday, March 29th: Space as a Place of Dispossession and Resistance

Wednesday, March 31st: What Counts as Resistance?

PART THREE: TRACING PATHWAYS OF POWER THROUGH ETHNOGRAPHY

Week 11:

Producing "The Other Side of the Tracks": Spatial Divisions of Labor and Power

For Monday, please read:

- Biehl, João (2005). "Selections". Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment. Berkeley, University of California Press: 35-67.
    - (optional) Jacob Riis *How the Other Half Lives* Chapters XYZ, available at: http://www.yale.edu/amstud/inforev/riis/title.html

For Wednesday, please read:

- Bourgois, Philippe (2002). "Office Work and the Crack Alternative Among Puerto Rican Drug Dealers in East Harlem". Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City. G. a. W. P. Z. Gmelch. Long Grove, Illinois, Waveland Press: 306-320.
- Davis, Mike (2006). "SAPing the Third World". Planet of Slums. New York, Verso: 151-173.

Monday, April 5th: Social Abandonment up Close

Wednesday, April 7th: Structural Causes of Social Abandonment

Week 12:
Living on the Edge

For Monday, please read:

- Li Zhang (2001). The Demolition of Zhejiangcun. Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks Within China's Floating Population. Stanford, Stanford University Press. **(CR)**
- Power, Matthew (2006). The Magic Mountain: Trickle Down Economics in a Philippine Garbage Dump. *Harper's Magazine*. 57-68.
- Packer, George (2006). "The Megacity: Decoding the Chaos of Lagos". *The New Yorker*. 62-75.

For Wednesday, please read:

- Kunstler, James (1993). Chapter Seven: The Evil Empire. The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-made Landscape. New York, Simon & Schuster.
- Kunstler, James (1993). Chapter Six: Joyride. The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-made Landscape. New York, Simon & Schuster.
- Paumgarten, Nick (2007). ""There and Back Again: The Soul of the Commuter"." The New Yorker. Vol.,No.April 16, 2007: 58-70.

Monday, April 12th: Slums and Edges

Wednesday, April 14th: Suburbs

Week 13:
Course Conclusion

For This Week, please read:

- The draft of your final paper.

Monday, April 19th: In-class peer-review of penultimate drafts.

Draft of Final Paper due in class.

Wednesday, April 21st: Course Conclusion

Friday April 30th:Post revised final paper to web