

POLITICS, RACE, AND RESISTANCE IN THE CITY

ARCH/HART 412

Fall 2018, Wednesdays 9.30am-12.00pm
Anderson Hall 217

Instructor: Dr. Sebastian Schmidt
sschmidt@rice.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays 3.00-4.30pm and by appointment, Herring Hall 253



National Guard troops arriving in Newark, NJ on July 14, 1967.
Photo by Don Hogan Charles/The New York Times.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar is an exploration of the history and theory of racially driven conflict in urban space, focusing on the United States since the early 20th century. We will question racial configurations in cities to discover their longer historical trajectory, and to deepen our understanding of racial conflict today. What is the urban history behind demands made by movements such as Black Lives Matter? How did Jewish people transition from being an ethnic Other to being considered ‘white’? How did poor Chinese migrants living in crowded inner-city ghettos become a ‘model minority’? Through assigned readings, class discussions, and student research projects we will tackle these complex questions (and others!) over the course of the semester. The study of historical cases will be

supported by robust explorations of relevant theory concerning concepts of public space, race, and conflict.

This class is taught as a research seminar and, in addition to graded writing assignments and in-class presentations, students will develop and write a research paper over the course of the semester. Appropriate guidance will be provided to find a topic that resonates with the course theme and the student's interests. Approaches from various disciplines, including, but not limited to, architecture, history, sociology, and art history are welcomed. For example, research on the Houston Housing Authority's failed mixed-income development at 2640 Fountain View could be used to analyze the power over urban space wielded by different stakeholders. A critical analysis of debates over the removal of confederate monuments and flags across the southern United States could be used to develop a deeper understanding of the forces that have allowed issues of the confederacy to enter public and legislative debate. A more art-driven project could study urban representations in postwar painting in New York City, adding to knowledge about race relations by investigating the depictions (or absence thereof) of urban experience as racial experience.

Moving between different disciplinary lines of inquiry, and encouraging participation from students coming from different departments, this seminar aims to open up the US city and its history as a complex set of issues relevant for the work of designers, critics, and historians alike.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will

- Gain an understanding of key concepts in the discussion of public space in the city and the powers that control it
- Acquire analytical and rhetorical tools to discuss constructions of race in urban space in 20th-century US history
- Challenge conventional wisdom and established historical narratives by developing awareness of omissions, exclusions, and oppressions in dominant discourse about cities
- Expand disciplinary frameworks by cultivating an interdisciplinary approach to academic inquiry
- Formulate an original research question investigating an issue in the relationship between race and urbanism

GRADING and REQUIREMENTS

- **20% participation**

The success of the seminar format of this class depends on the thorough preparation and active participation of everyone involved. Attendance is *assumed* and your participation grade will be impacted if you fail to actively participate. Seminar meetings and readings are complements, not substitutes, and all students are expected to complete reading assignments each week.

- **15% class moderation**

Each week, 1-2 students will be responsible for opening the discussion by bringing questions and materials to class that were inspired by the reading assignments. Some additional research on the readings, authors, or underlying concepts and histories may also be required. The emphasis of this exercise is not on students being able to answer questions or to explain the readings, but on being able to take a lead in guiding their classmates through the discussion. Asking evocative questions or bringing materials to class that challenge some of the ideas contained in the readings will be most productive. If the moderation contains a presentation component, this should not exceed 10 minutes. The preparation of slides or other materials such as handouts is at the moderators' discretion.

- **10% for each of two writing assignments (total 20%)**

The writing assignments are designed to provide an opportunity to structure the workload for the semester and work towards the development of the final research project. Therefore, it is important that they be completed on time. Late submissions will result in the deduction of a third of a letter grade per day. Length: 500 words.

- **15% individual research presentation**

This is an exercise in form as much as content. Therefore, the two most important factors in the determination of the grade are strict observation of the schedule and the clear articulation of the overall argument of the research. In addition, the pacing of the presentation, selection of visual materials, and audience engagement will be considered.

- **30% final research paper**

The grade of the paper is based entirely on the final version submitted at the end of the semester. Therefore, students are encouraged to seek feedback early and repeatedly over the course of the term. The grade of the paper is determined based on the originality of the research question, as well as the level of engagement with relevant secondary and, where possible, primary sources. Length: 2,500-3,000 words.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students will be held to the standards of the Rice Honor Code. Information about the Code and its administration is available at <http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/>. You are required to clearly reference all sources that you use in your research for this class, and all suspected violators of this policy will be reported to the Rice Honor Council for adjudication.

ABSENCE POLICY

Attendance at all weekly seminar meetings is expected and assumed. If you need to miss class due to illness or another important reason, please make every effort to contact me via email ahead of time. In cases that warrant an absence, you will be excused and there will be no repercussions for your grade. Granting an excused absence is at my own discretion. Whenever appropriate, you will be given an additional assignment that will help you review the course content that you missed.

COMMUNICATION AND AVAILABILITY

Contact me directly with questions concerning your grades or performance in class, assignments, or other issues that may affect your participation. I am available via email, and during posted office hours, as well as other times by appointment. I will respond to emails within 48 hours at the latest (and usually much sooner), not including weekends and holidays.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

This syllabus is subject to change with advance notice.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

CENTER FOR CIVIC LEADERSHIP and VOTER REGISTRATION

<http://ccl.rice.edu>

Rice University has joined the All In Campus Democracy Challenge (allinchallenge.org) to increase student voting rates on campus (in 2016, 82.5% of Rice students were registered to vote, but only 66% of those students voted in the general election). This course studies areas of urbanism and architecture that are closely entwined with politics, thereby dealing with a deeply political aspect of US history. Students are encouraged to discuss the politics of US urban history in class and outside of class, including making their voices heard in the political process. The deadline to register to vote in Texas is October 9.

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

<http://oaa.rice.edu>

The Office of Academic Advising coordinates all advising activities at Rice and has a wealth of resources available for anything from improving your performance in a specific class, to helping you build better time management skills, and identifying your educational goals.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

<https://dss.rice.edu>

If you have a documented disability that may affect academic performance, you should:

- 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Support Services (Allen Center, Room 111 / adarice@rice.edu / x5841) to determine the accommodations you need; and
- 2) meet with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

WELLBEING & COUNSELING CENTER

<https://wellbeing.rice.edu>

The Wellbeing and Counseling Center is a great first point of contact if you have general or specific concerns and questions about wellbeing or mental health.

OFFICE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION & TITLE IX SUPPORT

<https://safe.rice.edu>

Federal Title IX legislation makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sexual orientation and/or gender are civil rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected such as race, national origin, religious identity, etc. As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. If you or someone you know has experienced violence or harassment, or if you have been accused of perpetrating an act of interpersonal violence, I can help connect you to Rice's Office of Sexual Violence Prevention & Title IX Support.

CENTER FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

<https://cwovc.rice.edu>

The Center for Written, Oral, and Visual Communication (CWOVC) offers workshops as well as individual consultations to review written assignments and practice oral presentations. It is located on the second-floor mezzanine of Fondren Library.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Wednesday, August 22

Course introduction – no reading assignments

Week 2 – workshop day (substitute screening of *Owned* on Friday, Sep 28,)

Wednesday, August 29

Preparation for in-class presentations – readings based on group assignment

Week 3

Wednesday, September 5

*****Assignment #1 assigned*****

The Public Sphere, Power, and the City

- Habermas, Jürgen. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)." *New German Critique*, no. 3 (1974): 49-55.
- Harvey, David. *Social Justice and the City*. Johns Hopkins Studies in Urban Affairs. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973, 9-36.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford, OX, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1991, 30-42.
- Harvey, David. "The Right to the City." *New Left Review*, no. 53 (2008): 23-40.

Week 4

Wednesday, September 12

Politics and Violence of Urban Space

- Winner, Langdon. "Do Artifacts Have Politics?". *Daedalus* 109, no. 1 (1980): 121-36.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. "The Violence of Public Art: "Do the Right Thing"." *Critical Inquiry* 16, no. 4 (1990): 880-99.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. "The Rhetoric of Urban Space." *New Left Review*, no. 209 (1995): 146-60.

Week 5

Wednesday, September 19

*****Assignment #1 due / 1st paper prompt assigned (ungraded)*****

Suburbanization and Black Residential Segregation in the US

- Hirsch, Arnold R. "With or without Jim Crow: Black Residential Segregation in the United States." In *Urban Policy in Twentieth-Century America*, edited by Arnold R. Hirsch and Raymond A. Mohl, 65-99. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993.
- Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. Oxford University Press, 1985, 190-218; notes.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton University Press, 2005, 32-55; notes.
- Biondi, Martha. "Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State." In *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*, edited by Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson, 116-21. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007.

Week 6

Wednesday, September 26

*****1st paper prompt due (ungraded)*****

Asserting and Contesting Urban Racial Identity

- Poe, Tracy N. "The Origins of Soul Food in Black Urban Identity: Chicago, 1915-

- 1947." *American Studies International* 37, no. 1 (1999): 4-33.
- Morrison, Toni. "Home." In *The House That Race Built*, edited by Wahneema Lubiano. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1998.
- Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law : A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. First edition. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017, vii-xvii; 214-239; notes.
- Harris, Dianne. *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013, ix-xi; 1-25; notes.

Friday, September 28

From ca. 5.30pm – Movie screening *Owned, a Tale of Two Americas* and Q&A with filmmaker Giorgio Angelini

Week 7

Wednesday, October 3

*****Assignment #2 assigned*****

Chinatown: The Building of Racial Categories

- Anderson, Kay J. "The Idea of Chinatown: The Power of Place and Institutional Practice in the Making of a Racial Category." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, no. 4 (1987): 580-98.
- Ward, Josi. "'Dreams of Oriental Romance': Reinventing Chinatown in 1930s Los Angeles." *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 20, no. 1 (2013): 19-42.
- Yip, Christopher L. "Californian Chinatowns: Built Environments Expressing the Hybridized Culture of Chinese Americans." In *Hybrid Urbanism : On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment*, edited by Nezar AlSayyad. Westport and London: Praeger, 2001.
- Broudehoux, Anne-Marie. "Learning from Chinatown : The Search for a Modern Chinese Architectural Identity." In *Hybrid Urbanism : On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment*, edited by Nezar AlSayyad. Westport and London: Praeger, 2001.

Week 8

Tuesday, October 9

Last day to register to vote in Texas

Wednesday, October 10

Ownership and Ethnic Identity

- Arreola, Daniel D. "Urban Ethnic Landscape Identity." *Geographical Review* 85, no. 4 (1995): 518-34.
- Mugerauer, Robert. "Porous Boundaries: Fence Patterns and Mexican-American Identity in San Antonio, Texas." In *Hybrid Urbanism : On the Identity*

- Discourse and the Built Environment*, edited by Nezar AlSayyad, 206-28. Westport and London: Praeger, 2001.
- Nicolaides, Becky M., and James Zarsadiaz. "Design Assimilation in Suburbia: Asian Americans, Built Landscapes, and Suburban Advantage in Los Angeles's San Gabriel Valley since 1970." *Journal of Urban History* 43, no. 2 (2017): 332-71.

Week 9

Wednesday, October 17

Memory and Monuments

- Barton, Craig Evan. "Duality and Invisibility : Race and Memory in the Urbanism of the American South." In *Sites of Memory : Perspectives on Architecture and Race*, edited by Craig Evan Barton. Hudson, NY and New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001.
- James, Erica Caple, and Malick W. Ghachem. "Black Histories Matter." *Perspectives on History* no. September (2015): No pagination. <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2015/black-histories-matter>
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. "Take Down the Confederate Flag - Now." *The Atlantic* (2015). Published electronically June 18, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/take-down-the-confederate-flag-now/396290/>
- Kytle, Ethan J., and Blain Roberts. "Take Down the Confederate Flags, but Not the Monuments." *The Atlantic* (2015). Published electronically June 25, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/-confederate-monuments-flags-south-carolina/396836/>
- Appelbaum, Yoni. "Take the Statues Down." *The Atlantic* (2017). Published electronically August 13, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/08/take-the-statues-down/536727/>
- The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, in Montgomery, AL (2018). <https://eji.org/national-lynching-memorial>

Week 10

Wednesday, October 24

*****Assignment #2 due / final presentation assigned*****

Unrest, Protest, or Riot? The Politics of Resistance

- McCann, Eugene J. "Race, Protest, and Public Space: Contextualizing Lefebvre in the U.S. City." *Antipode* 31, no. 2 (1999): 163-84.
- Abu-Lughod, Janet L. *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles*. First issued as an Oxford University Press paperback ed. 2007, 227-268.
- LA 92* (documentary film), produced by Sarah Gibson, 2017. Fondren call number F869 .L89 A2537 2017

Week 11

Wednesday, October 31

*****Final paper assigned*****

The Long, Hot Summer of 1967

National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*. New York Times ed. New York, NY: Bantam, 1968, 1-29.

Mumford, Kevin. "Harvesting the Crisis: The Newark Uprising, the Kerner Commission, and Writings on Riots." In *African American Urban History since World War II*, edited by Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe William Trotter. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Gillon, Steven M. *Separate and Unequal: The Kerner Commission and the Unraveling of American Liberalism*. First edition. ed. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2018, ix-xvi; 1-64; 293-317; notes.

Week 12

Wednesday, November 7

In-class research presentations

Week 13

Wednesday, November 14

In-class research presentations

Week 14

Wednesday, November 21

Final Discussion – assignments TBA

Week 15

Wednesday, November 28

Final reviews in the School of Architecture – no class

Week 16/17

*****Final paper due*****

Exact date based on final exam schedule

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