

URBDP 565A
AMERICAN URBAN HISTORY
Spring 2012

Instructor: Manish Chalana, Dept. of Urban Design and Planning

Meeting time: MW: 10:30-11:50

Meeting place: GLD 440

Credits: 3; **Format:** Graduate seminar

Course Website: <https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/chalana/19639/>

Instructor contact info: 448C Gould, chalana@u.washington.edu, 206-616-6051

Office hours: by appointment only

Course Description

This course is designed as a graduate-level seminar in American Urban History. Its purpose is to provide students with the opportunity for immersion in historical scholarship that addresses the social, economic, political, technological, and cultural forces that have shaped the development of American cities. As a seminar, this course emphasizes reading and discussion as the primary modes of learning. To promote engagement with the course and content, students will be actively involved by taking turns as presenters and discussion leaders.

Required readings

Core Textbook

The Evolution of American Urban Society, 7th Edition, Howard P. Chudacoff, Judith E. Smith, and Peter C. Baldwin. **SBN-13:** 978-0136015710

Course Readings

Bender, Thomas. Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in 19th-Century America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Chauncey, George. Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of a Gay Male World, 1890-1940. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.

Jackson, Kenneth T. Crabgrass Frontier : the Suburbanization of the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Thrush, Coll. Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place: University of Washington, 2007.

Spain, Daphne. How Women Saved the City. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Wade, Richard. The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830: University of Illinois Press. 1996.

Warner, Sam Bass. *Streetcar Suburbs: the Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Course Readings

Copies of the books used in the course are being held on reserve at the Architecture Library on the third floor of Gould Hall.

Course Organization

The class meets on Monday and Wednesday. Ordinarily the class on Mon will be centered on a discussion of the core text, led by the instructor. The Wed classes would be set aside for book discussions led by students. Teams of class members, on a rotating basis, will be responsible for making a presentation on the books and leading the discussion sessions on them.

Seminar requirements

Requirements for a **seminar-style course** are rather straightforward: do the readings, show up, pay attention, and engage in discussion that is rooted in the readings. Look for emerging patterns among and between the works we cover from week to week.

Book Presentations

You will be expected to participate in leading discussions of TWO books during the quarter as a member of the team, with shared responsibilities and prepare—in writing—the following:

- 1) intellectual biography for the author(s)
- 2) critical reception of the work (review at least four published reviews in reputable journals)
- 3) contextualizing the work in historical/contemporary scholarship (incl. contributions to the field of urban history)
- 4) book review/summary/think piece/outline of the book including critique of the contents (thesis, research method and writing style)

You will make these presentations in **teams of 5-6** with other class members. This means reading the book thoroughly, meeting in advance with other team members, and preparing a group presentation lasting no more than **30 minutes** total. Your responsibility is to bring the class to a shared understanding of the kinds of sources and research methods used by the author, the arguments and evidence presented in the works, and its overall contribution to the field of American urban history. You may want to discuss in advance with the instructor, to get some feedback on your approach and to build confidence in your planned presentation.

When it is your turn to make a presentation on the reading, you will:

- develop a written book report covering all areas of the assignment
- post the book reports on the assigned boards at least **24-hrs before** the presentation
- make a visual presentation, then help facilitate the discussions that follows.

Final Paper

You will write an original research paper applying any of the themes of American urban history that we have been discussing in class to the case of Seattle. A more detailed description of the assignment is available on the course webpage. Due dates:

May 21: Final paper (3500 words)

Note: Student presentations will start on Week 9; 5 students will presenting their research until the end of the quarter.

Grading

45% book reports & presentation

40% final paper

15% in-class participation

Deadlines

There is a penalty of 10% grade reduction in case of late submission that is within three days of the due date; from day 4-7 you will lose 25% of your grade; submissions after day 7 do not earn any credit. Standard exceptions for major medical situations apply; such situations should be discussed with the instructor.

Other Policies

This class is of course governed by all of the university's student policies, including those on plagiarism and multiple submissions. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these.

More information is available on this website:

<http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm>

Resources for American Urban History

The Architecture Library on the third floor of Gould Hall holds an extensive collection of scholarly works on American urban history. You may also wish to explore some online resources. The major online discussion list for those in the field of Urban History is H-urban, a link to which is provided on the course webpage. I suggest that you join this list, if only for the quarter, as it is a critical source of information on the subject.

In addition there are innumerable web sites devoted to various aspects of urban history and you may wish to visit some of them. Flagship periodicals in the field include the *Journal of Urban History*, and the *Journal of Planning History*, where you will find current scholarship as well as reviews of recent publications. Scholarly meetings include the Urban History Association and the Society for American City and Regional Planning History, which meet regularly.

Schedule

⇒ Sign for 3 book discussion presentations

Week 1: BROAD OVERVIEWS OF AMERICAN URBAN HISTORY

Mon 26 March

Introductions. Syllabus Review. Overview of American Urban History. Sign-Up for Books.

Wed 28 March

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapter 10, pp. 247-277

Week 2: INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL HISTORIES OF URBANIZATION

Mon 2 April

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-56

Wed 4 April

Book Discussion: Bender, Thomas. Toward an Urban Vision: Ideas and Institutions in 19th-Century America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Week 3: CLASSIC STUDIES OF THE URBANIZATION PROCESS

Mon 9 April

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapters 3, pp. 57-75

Wed 11 April

Book Discussion: Wade, Richard. The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830. University of Illinois Press, 1996

Week 4: IMMIGRATION, CITY POLITICS, AND THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS ON AMERICAN URBAN HISTORY

Mon 16 April

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapters 4, pp. 76-101

Wed 18 April

Book Discussion: Warner, Sam Bass. Streetcar Suburbs: the Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978

Week 5: TOWARD AN URBAN HISTORY INCLUSIVE OF EXPERIENCES OF THE "OTHER"

Mon 23 April

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapters 5-6, pp. 102-151

Wed 25 April

Book Discussion: Thrush, Coll. Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place. University of Washington Press, 2007

Week 6: URBAN SOCIAL REFORM AND SOCIAL RELATIONS OF GENDER IN AMERICAN URBAN HISTORY

Mon 30 April

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapters 7, pp. 152-174

Wed 1 May

Book Discussion: Spain, Daphne. How Women Saved the City. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001

Week 7: THE DISCOVERY OF A GAY URBAN HISTORY

Mon 7 May

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapter 8, pp. 175-214

Wed 9 May

Book Discussion: Chauncey, George. Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of a Gay Male World, 1890-1940. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.

Week 8: SUBURBANIZATION

Mon 14 May

Chudacoff and Smith, Chapter 9, pp. 215-246

Wed 16 May

Book Discussion: Jackson, Kenneth T. Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Week 9: SEATTLE URBAN HISTORY

⇒ *Research Paper Due*

Mon 21 May

Student Presentation

Wed 23 May

Student Presentation

Week 10: SEATTLE URBAN HISTORY

Mon 28 May

No Class

Wed 30 May

Student Presentation

Note: The syllabus is based on an earlier version of the course developed by Prof. Gail Dubrow.