

CITIES AND OTHER TERRITORIES: PUBLIC SPACE, THE PUBLIC REALM AND PUBLIC ART PAS 585

Fall 2008

Tuesdays, 6:00pm-8:50pm

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This multidisciplinary course examines city-space as both a real and conceptual entity, exploring the complexities of the public sphere within local and global territories of the urban, suburban and *disurban*. Utilizing a history of writings on cities, public space, art & architectural practice, and related subjects, we will examine urban and other environments as porous zones in which real and imaginary borders are continuously under construction and erasure- in relation to economic development, enclaves of class and race, and how space functions as an intermediary between experiences of public and private. The city unfolds as a matrix of social affiliations and disaffiliations, identifications and alienations, stable and fractured community structures, and flows of bodies, capital, desires, fears, and hopes. We observe contestations between open and closed spaces, between private and public interests, between access and inaccessibility. It is important to understand that “public space” is, in and of itself, a space of *control*.

What is the task of art in the public and/or private realm, relative to such complex conditions? What is at stake in utilizing public space for culture in the face of private and municipal forces that transform? In order to address these and other questions, we will need to study the evolution of the city in relation to the evolution of notions of public space, and the public sphere. As there really is no theoretical or practical consensus on what constitutes “the city,” “the public,” “public domain” or “public space,” we will observe that such concepts are articulated in quite distinct ways across a range of disciplines and discourses.

Why are we preoccupied with such issues? Because it is central to democracy that the public sphere (whether we are referring to artistic, intellectual and other cultural activities for civic benefit, or, to various forms of political organization) remains an actively contested territory, particularly if we are interested in engaging the imaginations of distinct “publics” so that they use their right to influence the social-political space of their cities- rather than existing as a phantom presence/silent majority consumed exclusively by daily rituals of work, money, family, real estate, and cultural tourism. We will consider the theoretical and practical challenges facing artists, architects, curators, theorists, geographers, urbanists and other cultural producers from various generational

and ideological perspectives, and distinct global locations, who seek to rethink the public sphere in terms of concepts/practices of public art, location/site-specificity, relational tactics, community-based engagement, political intervention, and artistic modes of social collaboration and participation.

Preliminary questions to consider:

What are cities? How do they function? Is any space truly “public” anymore? Was it ever? Where or what are the borders, at once real and theoretical, material and psychological, that constitute the interstitial zones between “the private” and “the public” within the urban?

Is it still possible to claim space in the public domain, in order to produce, even temporarily, a new condition that is transformative (along political, ideological, perceptual and other lines) for citizens— or, in collaboration with citizens? If artistic, architectural and other types of cultural interventions into city-spaces constitute a kind of ‘urban acupuncture’ (an expression used to describe a phase in the urban development of Barcelona), what is the underlying condition that requires treatment, beyond the symptoms of an increasingly restrictive public domain?

If it is true that the public domain, as well as our domains of privacy (whatever is meant by “public” and “private” today), has become an increasingly securitized, over-regulated sphere of municipal controls in U.S. cities, what is the role (and responsibility) of artists, architects, urbanists and others to question such developments? How do artists and other cultural producers develop new communication tools to engage these diverse constituencies and publics, in order to re-activate alternate forms of urban citizenship?

COURSE STIPULATIONS

You will be graded according to the following percentages:

Class Participation (questions, discussion, etc.): 10%

5-page Midterm paper: 30%

10-page Final paper: 50%

In-class Presentations: 10%

No more than 3 class absences are permitted; an excess of 3 absences will result in a failing grade. It is necessary to inform the instructors in advance of missing a class, indicating the reason for the absence. Additionally, chronic lateness to class will result in a reduction of your overall grade. {The instructors reserve the right to re-schedule a class for a weekend day in order to facilitate a site trip.}

Selected introductory quotes:

“The figure of the flaneur. He resembles the hash eater, takes space up into himself like the latter. In hashish intoxication, the space starts winking at us: ‘What do you think may have gone on here?’ And with the very same question, space accosts the flaneur.”

- Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 841.

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“The production of psychogeographic maps, or even the introduction of alterations such as more or less arbitrarily transposing maps of two different regions, can contribute to clarifying certain wanderings that express not subordination to randomness but complete insubordination to habitual influences (influences generally categorized as tourism, that popular drug as repugnant as sports or buying on credit). A friend recently told me that he had just wandered through the Harz region of Germany while blindly following the directions of a map of London.”

- Guy-Ernest Debord, *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*

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“At this point, cognitive mapping in the broader sense comes to require the coordination of existential data (the empirical position of the subject) with unlived, abstract conceptions of the geographic totality.”

- Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*

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“What is this place?”

- Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*

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“The right to the city, says Henri Lefebvre, ‘cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities.’ On the contrary, ‘it can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life.’ The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of access to what already exists: it is a right to change it.”

- David Harvey, *The Right to the City*

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“... the essence of public domain: different groups become attached to a particular place and somehow or other they must reach a compromise. Which codes should dominate there? What behavior should be tolerated? Who is allowed to ask whom to adapt? These are questions that are part and parcel of meaningful public space. From our viewpoint, a cultural-geographic analysis must tackle both the analysis of the production of all kinds of places and the analysis of the specific way in which those

places are used or consumed, sometimes contrary to the intentions of the producer. In the network society everyone puts together their own city. Naturally this touches on the essence of the concept of public domain. The modern city is most easily understood as an archipelago of enclaves, and if the citizen is continuously occupied with maintaining his or her own small network with as little possible friction with other groups, then that does indeed ostensibly spell the demise of any form of public domain. However, that is not how the private space of the archipelago resident looks. The paradoxical fact is that many people are still searching for that experience of intensely felt public places. Public domain, is in our firm opinion, not so much a place as an experience. Public domain experiences occur at the boundary between friction and freedom. On the one hand there is always the tension of a confrontation with the unfamiliar; on the other, the liberation of the experience of a different approach. In the main, our public domain experiences are in fact related to entering the parochial domain of 'others.'"

- Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp, In Search of New Public Domain

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"You don't get to go just anywhere in a city, and the same is true of cyberspace. In both domains, barriers and thresholds play crucial roles. Once public and private spaces are distinguished from each other they can begin to play complementary roles in urban life; a well-organized city needs both. And so it is in cyberspace. At the very least, this means that some part of our emerging electronic habitat should be set aside for public uses -- just as city planners have traditionally designated land for public squares, parks, and civic institutions. A space is genuinely public, as Kevin Lynch once pointed out, only to the extent that it really is openly accessible and welcoming to members of the community that it serves. It must also allow users considerable freedom of assembly and action. And there must be some kind of public control of its use and its transformation over time. The same goes for public cyberspace, so creators and maintainers of public, semipublic, and pseudopublic parts of the online world -- like the makers of city squares, public parks, office building lobbies, shopping mall atriums, and Disneyland Main Streets -- must consider who gets in and who gets excluded, what can and cannot be done there, whose norms are enforced, and who exerts control."

- William J. Mitchell, City of Bits

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"... locality-producing activities are not only context-driven but are also context-generative."

- Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at Large

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"'WHERE DO I BELONG?' seems to be the question that plagues so many of the discussions that I participate in. As a constant lament it refers to dislocations felt by displaced subjects towards disrupted histories and to shifting and transient national identities.

- Irit Rogoff, Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture

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“... the notion of urban acupuncture as developed by my colleague, the distinguished Barcelona urbanist Manuel de Sola Morales. By this term he intends a similar strategy of making catalytic, small-scale interventions, with the condition that they should be realizable within a relatively short period of time, and capable of achieving a maximum impact with regard to the immediate surroundings.”

- Kenneth Frampton, SEVEN POINTS FOR THE MILLENNIUM an untimely manifesto

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“We are concerned with the understanding of how cities and societies change on the basis of collective projects and societal conflicts generated through history. Our questions address the issue of how and why the creators challenge the dominants....”

- Manuel Castells, A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Change

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“The city in transition, in immanent and perpetual flows; not the city undergoing transition, in transcendent structural change.”

- Deborah Hauptmann, Cities in Transition

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“...the site has been transformed from a physical location – grounded, fixed, actual – to a discursive vector – ungrounded, fluid, virtual.”

- Miwon Kwon, One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity

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“The question then is: How can artists continue creating signs in the city? From my point of view there are three possibilities to confront: work from the idea of temporality; work from the relation with the context; or make an interdisciplinary collaboration.”

- Antoni Muntadas, “Revealing Public Space: A Conversation between Juan Herreros & Antoni Muntadas”

COURSE SYLLABUS

(subject to change)

8/26/08

To view in class:

Documentation of Michael Asher, *George Washington* at the Art Institute of Chicago, 1979 and 2005.

9/2/08

The Fall of Public Man, Richard Sennett, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1974/1992.

- "The Public Domain," pp. 3-27.
- "Turmoil of Life in the 19th Century/The Impact of Industrial Capitalism on Public Life," pp. 125-149.

Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century, Peter Hall, Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

- "Cities of Imagination," pp. 1-12.

Mutations, Rem Koolhaas (et al), Actar Editorial, 2001.

- "How to Build a City"

9/9/08

The Arcades Project, Walter Benjamin (translated by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin), The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Cambridge and London, 2002.

- Translators' Forward, pp. ix-xiv
- Exposes: "Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century" (1935), and "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century" (1939), pp. 1-26.

The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project, Susan Buck-Morss, MIT Press, 1991.

- "Introduction," pp. 3-7.
- "Spatial Origins," pp. 22-46.

Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture, Anthony Vidler, The MIT Press: Cambridge and London, 2000/2001.

- Introduction, pp. 1-14.
- "Agoraphobia- Psychopathologies of Urban Space," pp. 25-50.
- "Spaces of Passage- The Architecture of Estrangement: Simmel, Kracauer, Benjamin," pp. 65-79.
- "Dead End Street- Walter Benjamin and the Space of Distraction," pp. 81-97.

9/16/08

The Economy of Cities, Jane Jacobs, Vintage Books 1969/70.

- "The Valuable Inefficiencies and Impracticalities of Cities," pp. 85-121.
- "How Cities Start Growing," pp. 122-144.

Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media, Beatrice Colomina, The MIT Press, 1994.

- "Archive," pp. 1-15.

Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century, Peter Hall, Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

- "The City of Monuments," pp. 188-217.

Recombinant Urbanism: Conceptual Modeling in Architecture, Urban Design, and City Theory, David Grahame Shane, Wiley-Academy, 2005.

- Preface, pp. 6-11.
- Introduction, pp. 13-17.

The Politics of Public Space, ed., Neil Smith and Setha Low, Routledge, 2006.

- "Introduction: The Imperative of Public Space," Neil Smith and Setha Low, pp. 1-16.

In Search of New Public Domain: Analysis and Strategy, Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp, NAI Publishers, 2002.

- "The Public Domain as Perspective," pp. 7-17.

"Habermas, the Public Sphere, and Democracy: A Critical Intervention,"
Douglas Kellner (online/digital publication)

Supplemental:

Recombinant Urbanism: Conceptual Modeling in Architecture, Urban Design, and City Theory, David Grahame Shane, Wiley-Academy, 2005.

- Chapter 1: "What is City Theory," pp. 19-77.

9/23/08

The Foucault Reader, Michel Foucault (ed. Paul Rabinow), Pantheon Books, 1984.

- "Panopticism," pp. 207-213.

"Other Spaces: The Principles of Heterotopia," Michel Foucault, Lotus International 48/49 (1986), pp. 10-24.

To view in class:

Dan Graham, *Two-Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube and a Video Salon*, 1992, VHS to DVD
Andrea Fraser with Jeff Preiss, Orchard Document, *May I Help You* 1991/2005/2006,
16mm to DVD

9/30/08

Situationist International Anthology, ed. Ken Knabb, Berkeley, Bureau of Public Secrets,
1981.

- "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography," Guy Debord, pp. 8-12
- "Theory of the Derive," Guy Debord, pp. 62-66.
- "Situationist Thesis on Traffic," Guy Debord, pp. 69-70.
- "Another City for Another Life," Constant, pp. 71-73.

The Image of the City, Kevin Lynch, MIT Press, 1960.

- "The Image of the Environment," pp. 1-13.
- "Three Cities," pp. 14-45.
- "The City Image and Its Elements," pp. 46-90.

Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century, Peter Hall, Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

- "The City of Towers," pp. 218-261.

Writing on Cities, Henri Lefebvre, Blackwell Publishers, 1995.

- "Philosophy and the City," pp. 86-93.
- "The Specificity of the City," pp. 100-103.

The Practice of Everyday Life, Michel de Certeau, (trans. Steven Rendall), University of California Press, 1984.

- "Walking in the City"

Supplemental:

Writing on Cities, Henri Lefebvre, Blackwell Publishers, 1995.

- "Lost in Transposition- Time, Space and the City," pp. 3-62.

10/7/08

Learning from Las Vegas, Robert Venturi, et. al., The MIT Press: Cambridge, 1977

- Prefaces
- "Part I: A Significance for A&P Parking Lots, or Learning from Las Vegas," pp. 3-73.
- "The Las Vegas Strip," p. 116.
- "Urban Sprawl and the Megastructure," pp. 117-127.

Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, Reyner Banham, The University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2001.

- "In the Rear-view Mirror," pp. 3-18.
- "The Transportation Palimpsest," pp. 57-76.

"Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," Fredric Jameson, *New Left Review*, number 146, July-August 1984, pp. 53-92.

The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture, ed. Hal Foster, Bay Press, 1983

- "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," Kenneth Frampton, pp. 16-30.

Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin, Hill and Wang, 1992.

- "Introduction: Variations on a Theme Park," Michael Sorkin, pp. xi-xv.
- "The World in a Shopping Mall," Margaret Crawford, pp. 3-30.

10/14/08

MIDTERM PAPER DUE

The Politics of Public Space, ed., Neil Smith and Setha Low, Routledge, 2006.

- "The Political Economy of Public Space," David Harvey, pp. 17-34.
- "Building the American Way: Public Subsidy, Private Space," Dolores Hayden, pp. 35-48.

The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History, Dolores Hayden, MIT Press, 1997.

- "Claiming Urban Landscapes as Public History: Contested Terrain," pp. 2-13.

Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics, Rosalyn Deutsche, MIT Press, 1998.

- "Introduction"
- "(Public Space and Democracy)- Tilted Arc and the Uses of Democracy"
- "(The Social Production of Space)- Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Projection and the Site of Urban 'Revitalization'"

10/21/08

Incorporations, Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter (editors), Zone Books, 1992.

- "Unfolding Events," Peter Eisenman, pp. 422-427.

Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity, Marc Auge, Verso Press, 1995.

- "Prologue," pp. 1-6.

- "From Places to Non-Places," pp. 75-115.

"The Generic City" in Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large*, (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995), 1248-1264.

Mutations, Rem Koolhaas (et al), Actar Editorial, 2001.

- "The Global City: Introducing a Concept and its History," Saskia Sassen, pp. 104-123.
- "Shopping (Harvard Project on the City)," pp. 124-183.
- "The American City," Sanford Kwinter & Daniela Fabricius, pp. 484-493.

Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin, Hill and Wang, 1992.

- "See you in Disneyland," Michael Sorkin, pp. 205-232.

10/28/08

The Castells Reader on Cities and Social Theory, ed. Ida Susser, Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

- "The Space of Flows," Manuel Castells, pp. 314-366.

In Search of New Public Domain, Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp, NAI Publishers, 2002.

- "The New Cultural Geography," pp. 21-69.

Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory, Edward W. Soja, Verso Books, 1997.

- "Preface and Postscript," pp. 1-9.
- "Spatializations: Marxist Geography and Critical Social Theory," pp. 43-75.

Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture, Irit Rogoff, Routledge 2000.

- "Introduction: This is not.... unhomed geographies," pp. 1-13.
- "Subjects/places/spaces," pp. 14-35.
- "Mapping," pp. 73-111.
- "Borders," pp. 112-143.

11/4/08

Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory, Edward W. Soja, Verso Books, 1997.

- "It All Comes Together in Los Angeles," pp. 190-221.
- "Taking Los Angeles Apart: Towards a Postmodern Geography," pp. 222-248.

The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory, Norman M. Klein, Verso: London and New York, 1997.

- "Introduction: Histories of Forgetting," pp. 1-26.
- "Booster Myths, Urban Erasure," pp. 27-72.

City of Quartz, Mike Davis, Vintage Books, 1992.

- Prologue: "The View from Futures Past," pp. 1-14.

Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin, Hill and Wang, 1992.

- "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space," Mike Davis, pp. 154-180.

11/11/08

Selection from Relational Aesthetics, Nicolas Bourriaud, Les Presses du Reel, 1998.

Selections from Did Someone Say Participate?: An Atlas of Spatial Practice, eds. Shumon Basar and Markus Miessen, The MIT Press, 2006.

Selections from Participation, ed. Claire Bishop, The MIT Press, 2006.

11/18/08

Three essays by Rosalyn Deutsche:

Barbara Kruger, ed. Ann Goldstein, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1999.

- "Breaking Ground: Barbara Kruger's Spatial Practice," pp. 76-84.

"Not-Forgetting: Mary Kelly's *Love Songs*," Grey Room no. 24 (Summer 2006): pp. 26-37.

Louise Lawler, Twice Untitled and Other Pictures (looking back), ed. Helen Molesworth, Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, 2006

- "Louise Lawler's Rude Museum," pp. 123-132.

11/25/08

In Search of New Public Domain, Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp, NAI Publishers, 2002.

- "Public Domain as a Brief for Design and Policy," pp. 109-135.

City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn, William J. Mitchell, The MIT Press: Cambridge and London, 1995/1996.

- "Pulling Glass," pp. 2-5.
- "Recombinant Architecture," pp. 46-105.
- "Soft Cities," pp. 106-131.

Recombinant Urbanism: Conceptual Modeling in Architecture, Urban Design, and City Theory, David Grahame Shane, Wiley-Academy, 2005.

- "Conclusion: Heterotopias, the Net City, and Recombinant Urbanism," pp. 304-315.

"Public Sphere_s," Steve Dietz
(online publication/digital distribution)

A Landscape of Events, Paul Virilio (translated by Julie Rose),
The MIT Press: Cambridge and London, 2000.

- "Forward by Bernard Tschumi," pp. viii - ix
- "The Fire Tomorrow," pp. 68-73.

12/2/08

Selection from Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art, ed.
Grant Kester, University of California Press, 2004.

Selection from Collectivism after Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination after 1945,
eds. Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette, University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

12/9/08

Final class:
Student Presentations.
Final Paper due.

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the professor as early in the term as possible. DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is located in the Student Union room 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.