

Humanities Seminars Program

City, Culture, Capital: The Rise (and Fall?) of the Modern City

Professor Malcolm Compitello

As the urbanist David Harvey has noted the city has been the motor of progress in modernity and the crucible of many of the social movements that have contested the darker underside of the modern. The ten three hour sessions of the class will study how cities came to reside at the center of the modern project, how they have been transformed over time and what those transformations might mean. It will also examine how the work of cultural artists, most importantly film makers, react to the urban process and how their works contribute to understanding the complex dynamic that forms the culture and politics of cities.

The seminar use case studies drawn from a variety of cities and important films about them show to how the city passes from backdrop to protagonist of the changes in the urban process. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which the content and form of film reveal the authors' views and explore the techniques necessary to decipher this creative process. This will allow all of those in the class to hone their analytic skills as urbanists and film critics!

Instructor Contact Information

Office Phone	520 621 7347
Email	compitel@email.arizona.edu
Home Phone	520 296 1473
Cell Phone	520 405 0562

Readings:

All the readings for the class are available as PDF's that you can download from our password-protected website at <http://course.hsp.arizona.edu> . They are divided into required and optional.

Films

We will draw on material from a number of films to illustrate the ideas being developed in class. Some of them are easily available to rent, for others I will provide links to enable you to open them in YouTube. I will set up several alternative screening venues for participants who cannot secure access to them in other ways.

Syllabus

Week 1: September 30

Introduction

- How To Read A Film
- Cartographic Imaginaries
- Cities On Film

Readings, Required

Clarke: "Previewing the Cinematic City"

Harvey: "City Future in City Past: Balzac's

Cartographic Imagination"

Readings, Optional

Harvey: "Cartographic Identities"

MacArthur: "Chinese Boxes and Russian Dolls:

Tracking the Elusive Cinematic City

Week 2: Oct. 7

In Praise Of The Modern City . . . And Its Discontents

See: Walter Ruttmann, *Berlin Symphony of a Great City*

Week 3: October 14

Urban transformations 1: Public and Private Space and Exclusion

Readings, Required

Mitchell: "The End of Public Space?."

Zukin: Whose Culture? Whose City?

Readings, Optional

Mitchell: "To Go Again to Hyde Park, "

Smith: "The Revanchist City."

Ghirardo "Public Space"

Week 4: October 21

Urban Transformations 2: Trouble In Utopia: Postmodernism And The City;

Readings, Required

Harvey: "The Invisible Political Economy of Architecture

Ghirardo: "Architecture After Modernism."

Harvey: "Postmodernism and the City."

Readings, Optional

Molotch "The City as Growth Machine."

Week 5: October 28

Urban Transformations 3: From Rio Nuevo To The Docklands And Back Again . . . Selling Place

Readings, Required

Harvey: "Spaces of Utopia" (just the section on Baltimore)

Philo and Kearns: "Culture, History and Capital."

Harvey: "Flexible Accumulation Through Urbanization"

Week 6: November 4

Case Study: A Good Plan Gone Bad

Reading, Required

Harvey: "The Art of Rent"

Week 7: November 18

From Utopia To Dystopia: *Blade Runner* And The End Of The Modern City

See: Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner*

Readings, Required

Davis, "Fortress LA"

Week 8: December 2

"We Will Always Have Paris! . . . The City Of Lights In The Cartographic Imaginary . . .

From Balzac To Woody Allen

See: Woody Allen, *Midnight in Paris*

Readings, Required

Harvey: "Monument and Myth: The Building of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart"

Week 9: December 9

Where Does The City Begin And End? The Question Of Scale

See: Iciar Bollaín, *Flowers from Another World*

Readings, Required

Marston: "The Social Construction of Scale"

Readings, Optional

Mitchell: "Sex and Sexuality: The Cultural Politics and Political Geography of Liberation"

Mitchell: "Feminism and Cultural Change: The Geographies of Gender."

Mitchell: "'A Place for Everyone': Cultural Geographies of Race."

Week Ten: December 16

Resistance Is Futile

See: Sergio Cabrera *The Spider's Stratagem*

Readings, Required:

Castells: "Networking Minds, Creating Meaning, Contesting Power"

Harvey: Rebel Cities

Readings, Optional

Duncombe, Stephen. "The Politics of Alternative Culture

Harvey: "Possible Urban Worlds."