**Georgetown University**

**ANTH 280-10 Summer 2016**

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**Urban Anthropology: Cultures of the City**

**Mondays through Thursdays; June 6 – July 8**

**1:00-3:00 PM Car Barn 303**

**Dr. Laurie King | [lek28@georgetown.edu](mailto:lek28@georgetown.edu)**

*“The city is the maximal expression of the human need – and capacity – for interdependence.” ~ Ulf Hannerz*

*“Cities are problems in organized complexity.” ~ Jane Jacobs*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the city as a product of, and a rich site for, humans’ negotiations over social and economic rights, identity, cultural meaning, and community. Drawing on a variety of historical, geographic, and ethnographic studies, we will ask whether urban life is qualitatively distinct from rural life. The city is a site of economic and political centralization, but also a landscape of sentiment and memory. It is a space of ritual observance and spectacle, as well as the location of suffering and dysfunction. Debates over urban planning encompass moral, cultural, and personal concerns, not simply the designs of economists, policymakers, and architects. Throughout the course, methodological questions regarding the city as an object of historical and ethnographic study are highlighted. We will look at Tokyo’s fish markets, mid-20th century New York City, post-Katrina New Orleans, Beirut, and Los Angeles in order to understand the complexity of the urban experience through a holistic and critical anthropological lens. The course will culminate in exploratory field research surveys of two different neighborhoods in Washington, DC

**Texts (*in alphabetical order*)**

Davis, Mike. 2006. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New Edition) [on blackboard]

Gmelch, George, Robert V. Kemper, Walter P. Zenner. 2010. *Urban Life: Readings in the Anthropology of the City* [selected chapters on blackboard]

Hannerz, Ulf. 1980. *Exploring the City*. [selected chapters on Blackboard]

Jacobs, Jane. 1992. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

Steinberg, Phil, and Rob Shields. 2008. *What Is a City?: Rethinking the Urban after Hurricane Katrina.*

**COURSE EVALUATION:**

Two short essays (4 pages), 20 points each 40%

Research proposal exercise 20%

In-class presentations 20%

Attendance and ***active*** participation 20%

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week One: June 6 - 9**

Monday:

Mapping the City: Discussion of maps and their various meanings and implications.

Urban Cognitive Mapping Exercise

Tuesday:

Pickett, Cadenasso, et al., “Urban Ecological Systems: Linking Terrestrial, Ecological, Physical, and Socioeconomic Components of Metropolitan Areas” (Blackboard)

Wednesday:

Chapters 1 and 2 in *Urban Life (*Gmelch, Kemper, and Zenner).

Thursday:

Chapters 4, 6, and 7 in *Urban Life (*Gmelch, Kemper, and Zenner).

**Week Two: June 13 - 16**

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday:

Chapters 1, 3 and 5 in *Exploring the City* (Hannerz).

Thursday:

Chapter 7, and Appendix: Analytical Concepts, in *Exploring the City* (Hannerz).

In-class social role domain mapping exercise.

**Week Three: June 20 – 23**

Monday and Tuesday:

Jacobs*, The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Parts I and II (Chapters 1-12). \*

*\* Given the extent of the readings and the telsecoping of one semester into five weeks, we will establish an academic "division of labor" whereby students will be assigned specific readings from these texts to present to the class. Students will help lead discussions of their assigned readings.*

***First Essay Assignment Due in class on Monday June 20th***

Wednesday and Thursday:

Davis, *City of Quartz* [selected chapters] \*

*\* Given the extent of the readings and the telsecoping of one semester into five weeks, we will establish an academic "division of labor" whereby students will be assigned specific readings from these texts to present to the class. Students will help lead discussions of their assigned readings.*

**Over the weekend:**

**WATCH ON SHARE STREAM ON BLACKBOARD:**

Film: “Chinatown” by Roman Polanski

**Week Four: June 27-30**

Monday and Tuesday:

*The Death and Life of Great American Cities,* Parts III and IV (Chapters 13-22). \*

*\* Given the extent of the readings and the telsecoping of one semester into five weeks, we will establish an academic "division of labor" whereby students will be assigned specific readings from these texts to present to the class. Students will help lead discussions of their assigned readings.*

Wednesday and Thursday:

*What Is a City?: Rethinking the Urban after Hurricane Katrina* (selected chapters)

King, L. “The Millennial Medina: Discourses of Time, Space, and Authenticity in Projects to Market and Renovate Beirut and Nazareth.”

Blom Hansen, Thomas and Oskar Verkaaik, “Urban Charisma: On Everyday Mythologies in the City.

**FRIDAY, JULY 1:**

*Field research tour of Eastern Market.*

*Meet at the Eastern Market Metro Station (Orange, Blue, or Silver Lines) at 2 PM.*

**Week Five: July 5-8**

Tuesday:

Chapters 9, 13, and 17 in the *Urban Lives* reader. (Available on Blackboard)

Wednesday:

*Field research tour of Anacostia.*

*Meet at the Anacostia Metro Station (Green Line) at 1 PM.*

Thursday:

In-class socio-cultural mapping and discussion based on fieldwork survey trips.

Friday:

Putting it all together: How do you now see and define “the city”?

***Second Essay Assignment due on July 8 (last day of class)***

***Research Proposal Exercise due on Monday, July 11th***