

CINEMA AND THE CITY
CMST 27101

Instructor: Nathan Holmes (nholmes@uchicago.edu)

Office Hours: Thursday 1-2:30 in the Harper Library café, or other times by appointment. If you're planning in advance to see me during drop-in hours, please try to drop an email.

LECTURES: Tuesday, Thursday 12:00PM-1:20 PM, Cobb 425

SCREENINGS: Thursday 7:00PM-10:00PM, Cobb 307

READINGS: All required readings for the class are posted on chalk. Additional readings may be posted throughout the quarter, which I will advise you about. There is no required text for the class. Of the readings listed below and posted on chalk, some are required to be read by the whole class, and some are to be read by individual students for response papers/presentations. I will notify you well in advance of the (all-class) required readings for the week.

REQUIREMENTS: Attendance at lectures AND screenings is mandatory. Screenings are considered an elemental component of the class and viewing with the class is considered a form of participation. Weekly lectures include a discussion component.

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING: There are three assignments, which are described below: a response to a supplementary reading/film (2-3 pages), a short mid-term paper (5-7 pages), and a final paper (10-12 pages). All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced, page numbered, and in 12 pt. font. Written assignments, aside from the response papers, should be submitted to me in class on the day they are due, or put in my mailbox outside of Cobb 307 before the end of class. Electronic submission of assignments may be possible, but only in extenuating circumstances. A due date for the final paper will be decided in-class.

Participation/Attendance: 20%

Response paper: 10%

Mid-Term paper: 30%

Final paper: 40%

Week 1: Conceptualizing Cinema and the City – The City in Visual Form and Genre

Readings for January 5:

Giuliana Bruno, "Motion and Emotion: Film and the Urban Fabric"

Readings for January 7:

Singer, "Sensation and the World of Urban Modernity"

Supplementary: Grievson, "Gangsters and Governance in the Silent Era," Patrick Keiller, "Urban Space in Early Film"

Jan. 7. – Screening:

In class: Unseen Cinema – Picturing a Metropolis,

More Treasures from the American Film Archives
Panorama of Ealing from a Moving Train
Screening: Never Weaken (Fred C. Newmeyer, 1921)
The Black Hand (D.W. Griffith, 1906), 7 min
Musketeers of Pig Alley (D.W. Griffith, 1912), 15 min
The Crowd (King Vidor, 1928) 92 min.

Week 2: Avant-Garde approaches to City-Space and the “City Symphony”

JAN. 12 - *Readings*: Kaes “Leaving Home: Film, Migration and the Urban Experience,” Siegfried Kracauer *Theory of Film* (excerpts), Mennel “Modernity and the City Film: Berlin” Marcel Carné “When Will Cinema Go Down Into the Street?”
Supplementary: Urrichio, “The City Viewed: The Films of Leyda, Browning, and Weinberg,”

JAN. 14. – *Screenings*

Manhatta (Paul Strand, Charles Scheeler, 1921), 6min.
Bronx Morning (Jay Leyda, 1931) 11 min.
Paris qui dort/The Crazy Ray (René Clair, 1923), 45min.
Berlin: Symphony of a Great City (Walter Ruttmann, 1927), 79 min.

Week 3: Film Noir

Readings: Dimendberg, “Naked Cities, Sobchack “Lounge-Time: Postwar Crises and the Chronotope of Film Noir,” G.K. Chesterton, “In Defense of Detective Stories” Gunning, “Illuminated Cities,” David Reid and Janet Walker “Strange Pursuit: Cornel Woolrich and the Abandoned City of the Forties.”

Jan. 21.

Force of Evil (Abraham Polonsky, 1948), 78 min.
He Walked By Night (Alfred Werker, 1948), 80 min.

Week 4: Views from Above and Below, Changing conceptions of the Modern City

Readings: Schleier “Skyscraper Cinema,” Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* excerpts, David L. Pike “Urban Nightmares and Future Visions: Life Beneath New York,” Manfredo Tafuri from *The American City*, Rem Koohaas from *Delirious New York*, Manny Farber “Underground Films”

January 28.

A Hare Grows in Manhattan (Fritz Freleng, 1947), 8 min,
Powers of Ten (Charles and Roy Eames, 1977), 9 min,
The City (Willard Van Dyke, Ralph Steiner, 1939), 43 min.
The Big Clock (John Farrow, 1948), 95 min.

Week 5: Abstract Space, French Modernization

Readings: Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, Laurent Marie “Jacques Tati’s *Play Time* as New Babylon,” Joan Ockmann “Architecture in a Mode of Distraction: Eight Takes on Jacques Tati’s *Play Time*.” Henri Lefebvre (excerpts), Roland Barthes (excerpts)

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE IN CLASS THURSDAY

Feb 4.

Screening: Playtime (Jacques Tati, 1967), 124min.

Week 6: The City in Motion - Transit and Automobile Space, The American City of the 1970s

Readings: Mitchell Schwartz, "Automobile," Mclain Clutter "Imaginary Apparatus: Film Production and Urban Planning in New York City, 1966-1975" Kevin Lynch, *Image of the City* (excerpts), Venturi and Brown, *Learning From Las Vegas* (excerpts)

Feb. 11.

Rendezvous (Claude LeLouch, 1976), 9 min.

French Connection (William Friedkin, 1971) 104 min.

Week 7: American City of the 1970s 2, Blaxploitation and the Ghetto

Readings: Peter Stanfield, "Walking These Streets," Loic Wacquant, "Three Pernicious Premises in the Study of the Ghetto," Paula J. Masood "Cotton in the City: The Black Ghetto, Blaxploitation and Beyond" Loic J.D. Waquant and William Julius Wilson "The Cost of racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City,"

Feb. 18.

Style Wars (Henry Chalfant, Tony Silver, 1983), 70min.

Across 110th Street (Barry Shear, 1971), 102min.

Week 8 – Subcultural Space, Penal Space, Spatial Appropriations

Feb 25.

Readings: Michel De Certeau "Spatial Practices I," Holmes "Screen Teens and the Dreamworld of Suburbia," Mike Davis "Fortress L.A." James Q. Wilson & George L. Kelling "Broken Windows," Lofland "Antiurbanism and the Representational War on the Public Realm"

SCREENING TIME SWITCH – SCREENING WILL BE AT 3:30 PM TODAY

Paris is Burning (Jennie Livingston, 1990), 76 min.

Over the Edge (Charlie Haas, Tim Hunter, 1979), 95 min.

Week 9 American Derivé –The Suburbs and Alternative Spatial practices, The Dualized City

Readings: Iain Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, "Urban Compositions" 173-218. De Certeau "Spatial Practices II" Dean MacCannell "Homeless Noir," Caldera "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation," Hannigan "Saved By a Mouse? Urban Entertainment and the Future of Cities"

Mar. 7. Screening – Guest introduction by author Kyle Beachy (to be confirmed)

Skateboard Videos – selection TBD

Infernal Affairs (Andy Lau, Andrew Mak, 2002), 101 min. – may be replaced with alternate film.

Mar. 11. Reading Period, No Screening

ASSIGNMENTS

RESPONSE PAPERS: Each student is responsible for one response paper during the course of the class. Response papers will be assigned or signed up for by students in the first class. Each class meeting, the student assigned will prepare a short summary (2-3 pages) of a supplementary reading or a film from the course reserves which they will upload to chalk and briefly talk about in class. The response presentation should include an overview of the paper/film, its main points/themes, images and narrative, and a suggestion of the ways it might tie into concepts and issues covered by the class. The written summaries will be useful to *all* class members towards the end of the term as you prepare to write your final paper as GUIDES to possible research sources or films to analyze (they are of course not to be plagiarized from in any way).

ASSIGNMENT 1: Choose a scene from a film we have watched in class and discuss the ways in which images within the scene function within the overall narrative as well as function as ideas about urban modernity (5-7 pages). Due Feb. 4 in class.

FINAL PAPER: Essay question to be determined. You will need to focus on a film or films screened in class, or film(s) of your choosing from the reserve list. (10-12 pages) Due date TBD.

For Class Reserve in the Film Studies Center:

Lonesome (Paul Fejos, 1928)
Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927)
M (Fritz Lang, 1931)
Bladerunner (Ridley Scott, 1982)
Street Scene (King Vidor, 1931)
The Fountainhead (King Vidor)
Escape From New York (John Carpenter, 1981)
They Live (John Carpenter, 1988)
The Warriors (Walter Hill, 1979)
Naked City (Jules Dassin, 1948)
Poltergeist (Tobe Hooper, 1982)
He Walked By Night (Alfred Werker, 1948)
New Jack City (Mario Van Peebles, 1991)
A propos de Nice (Jean Vigo, 1930)
Rien que les heures (Alberto Cavalcanti, 1926)
Killer's Kiss (Stanley Kubrick, 1955)
The Asphalt Jungle (John Huston, 1950)
Los Angeles Plays Itself (Thom Andersen, 2003)
Candyman (Bernard Rose, 1992)
Taking of Pelham One Two Three (Joseph Sargent, 1974)
Klute (Alan J. Pakula, 1971)

