

PSC 339
Advanced Topics in Political Thought
Winter 2020

Power and Place in the City

Instructor: Dr. John French

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Class Time: Mon/Wed 11:20-12:50

Location: Arts and Letters Room 314

Course Description:

In 2008, for the first time in human history, a majority of the world's population lived in cities. All over the world, people are abandoning rural areas for cities, in search of jobs, security, and better living conditions. At the same time, there is no place where the influence of political power on our lives is more tangible than in the shape and structure of cities. Cities are collective projects, built and rebuilt by thousands or millions of people over long periods, but relatively few of those people have a say in the decisions that determine the development of the city— in many cases, residents of cities are unaware of when, how, or by whom these decisions are made. At the same time, residents of cities often use them in ways that planners and political leaders did not intend or envision.

This course will explore the ways in which cities, and the way we live in them, reflect the changing distributions of political power in our societies. We will use the work of political theorists to think through urban issues like inequality, gentrification, segregation, crime, and infrastructure.

Required Texts:

The following books are required and are available in the bookstore. All other readings will be available on the course Desire2Learn site.

Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish*.
James C. Scott. *Seeing Like a State*

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade in this course will come primarily from three writing assignments. The first two will be 6-8 page papers, which you will write in response to prompts handed out in class. These papers will be based mostly on assigned readings, but you will also be asked to incorporate examples from the city you are writing about for the final paper, described below. Dates when the prompts will be distributed, as well as due dates for the papers, are listed in the schedule below. Each of these papers is worth 20% of your final grade.

The final paper, of 10-12 pages, will require you to do a bit of research on your own, but will also draw heavily on assigned readings. For the paper, you will be choosing a city— it must be a *major* city, and it cannot be Chicago— and one of the following issue areas: crime; segregation; gentrification; informal housing/slums; infrastructure; transportation; or health. Your choice of city and issue are due to me in class on January 22, since you will also be writing about the city in the short papers. (More than one person may choose the same *city*, but no two people may do the same *combination* of city and issue.) You will apply the theoretical concepts discussed in the class (primarily those of James C. Scott, Henri Lefebvre, and Michel Foucault) to your chosen city and issue. More detailed guidelines for this assignment will be distributed later in the course. The final paper will be due to the dropbox on D2L by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, March 18th, and is worth 30% of your final grade.

There will also be several short assignments, mainly consisting of short writing assignments, given at various points throughout the quarter. Some of these will be completed in class, while others will be done at home. These assignments are collectively worth 15% of your final grade.

The remainder of your points in the course will come from in-class participation. Attendance will be taken every day, and more than two unexcused absences will reduce your participation grade directly. In-class participation is worth 15% of your final grade.

The breakdown of grades and the grade scale are as follows:

Paper 1:	20%	A: 94-100
Paper 2:	20%	A-: 90-93
Final Paper:	30%	B+: 87-89
Short Assignments:	15%	B: 84-86
Participation:	15%	B-: 80-83

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

M Jan 6: Course Introduction: What is a City?

W Jan 8: 1. Geoff Manaugh: *A Burglar's Guide to the City*, pp. 33-80 (D2L)
2. Foucault: *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 73-103

M Jan 13: 1. Scott: *Seeing Like a State*, pp. 53-83
2. Wade Graham: *Dream Cities*, pp. 41-70 (D2L)
3. Antonia Malchik: "The End of Walking" (D2L)

W Jan 15: 1. Scott: *Seeing Like a State*, pp. 87-146
2. Sanjoy Mazumdar: "Autocratic Control and Urban Design: The Case of Tehran, Iran" (D2L)
3. Colin Marshall: "Singapore – The Most Meticulously Planned City in the World" (D2L)

M Jan 20: **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: No Class**
1. Hunter Oatman-Stanford: "Demolishing the California Dream" (D2L)
2. Evan McKenzie: *Privatopia*, pp. 29-55 (D2L)

W Jan 22: 1. Scott: *Seeing Like a State*, pp. 193-222
2. Henri Lefebvre: "The Right to the City" (D2L)
Deadline to choose your city and issue

M Jan 27: 1. Donald Kingsbury: "Infrastructure and Insurrection: The Caracas Metro and the Right to the City in Venezuela" (D2L)
2. Leo Hollis: "Cities Belong to Us" (D2L)
3. Amy Fleming: "What Would a City That is Safe for Women Look Like?" (D2L)

W Jan 29: Foucault: *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 170-228
Prompts distributed for Paper #1

M Feb 3: 1. Richard Rothstein: *The Color of Law*, pp. 3-38 (D2L)
2. Evan McKenzie: *Privatopia*, pp. 56-78 (D2L)
3. Kevin M. Kruse: "What Does a Traffic Jam in Atlanta Have to Do with Segregation? Quite a Lot."

W Feb 5: 1. Herbert Gans: "The Failure of Urban Renewal" (D2L)
2. Thomas: "When Affordable Housing is Separated by Design" (D2L)
3. Josh Cohen: "New Anti-Homeless Architecture" (D2L)

M Feb 10: 1. Ben Austen: *High Risers*, pp. 131-140, 148-154, 221-234 (D2L)
2. Larry Bennett and Adolph Reed, Jr.: "The New Face of Urban Renewal: The Near North Redevelopment Initiative and the Cabrini-Green Neighborhood" (D2L)
3. Joy Knoblauch: "Do You Feel Secure?" (D2L)

W Feb 12: Film in class: *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*
Paper #1 due

M Feb 17: 1. Foucault: *Security, Territory, Population*, pp. 87-110 (D2L)
2. James C. Scott, et al.: "The Production of Legal Identities Proper to the State" (D2L)
Prompts for Paper #2 distributed in class

W Feb 19: 1. Reuben S. Rose-Redwood: "Indexing the Great Ledger of the Community (D2L)
2. Marco Cicchini: "A New 'Inquisition'? Police Reform, Urban Transparency and House Numbering in Eighteenth Century Geneva" (D2L)

M Feb 24: 1. Winifred Curran: "Mexicans Love Red' and Other Gentrification Myths" (D2L)
2. Nilgun Ergun: "Gentrification in Istanbul" (D2L)

W Feb 26: 1. Mike Davis: *Planet of Slums*, pp. 1-19; 50-69 (D2L)
2. Gareth Curless: "Better Housing Conditions are of Vital Importance to the Ordinary Man': Slum Clearance in Post-War Khartoum" (D2L)
3. Annika Hinze: "Sold Overnight" (D2L)

M Mar 2: In class: 99% Invisible: "The Plat of Zion"
Paper #2 due

W Mar 4: Foucault: *The Birth of Biopolitics*, pp. 27-70 (D2L)

M Mar 9: 1. Amie Thurber and James Fraser: "Disrupting the Order of Things" (D2L)
2. Matthew Hollow: "Governmentality on the Park Hill Estate: The Rationality of Public Housing" (D2L)

W Mar 11: 1. Matthew Gandy: "The Paris Sewers and the Rationalization of Urban Space" (D2L)
2. Howard Phillips: "Locating the Location of a South African Location: The Paradoxical Prehistory of Soweto" (D2L)

**FINAL PAPER DUE IN D2L DROPBOX
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, by 5:00 PM**