2014

408- BL Constructing the Public: Regionalism and Urban Sprawl Since 1932

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CONSTRUCTING THE PUBLIC (theme: “Regionalism and Urban Sprawl Since 1932”)

Course Description

This course has gone through many permutations, but it has always been about the American political imagination, its aspirations and failures, its periodic atrophy and reawakening. In part, the course arises from interactions with my fellow Americans, especially students, over the last thirty years. The belief that economic questions always determine our options heavily taxes and threatens to repossess our political imagination. If things cannot be different, why bother with politics? The belief in economic determinism has not always reigned supreme in American history, but it has dominated our politics over the past several generations, as anyone who proposes radical alternatives to the status quo quickly learns. At a time when we appear to be once again questioning economic determinism – or at least that market fundamentalism that defines government as the problem --, it might be useful to explore other times in our history when Americans have believed that politics could reshape society in significant ways. This course tries to do exactly that and, in the process, it seeks to remind us that the fundamental starting point of politics is the possibility of alternative futures.

A second source of this course is my deepening interest in and respect for philosophy. Possibility is also a fundamental starting point of philosophy. The conviction that things can be different is a powerful inducement to thinking seriously about human affairs. Between past and future, Hannah Arendt put it, stand thinking women and men. The immediate task of contemporary philosophy, Stanley Cavell adds, is to overcome "a sense of the exhaustion of human possibility." Few philosophers have spoken more forcefully about possibility and political
imagination than John Dewey. A "sense of possibilities that are unrealized and that might be realized" provided the most telling criticism of the status quo, Dewey argued. “Only imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual," he added, making imagination “the chief instrument of the good.”

The deepest source of this course is my study of American history over the past thirty years. Indeed Dewey’s philosophy spoke to real possibilities embedded in our history and culture. Defining democracy as a "working faith in the possibilities of human nature," Dewey embraced the "capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment and action if proper conditions are furnished." Dewey continued: "I did not invent this faith," but “acquired it from my surroundings as far as those surroundings were animated by the democratic spirit." Despite the many failures of American democracy, Dewey remained hopeful to the end of his life, believing that “be the evils what they may, the experiment is not yet played out. The United States are not yet made; they are not a finished fact to be categorically assessed.” The course proceeds in that spirit.

The specific focus of the course this year is the history of American cities since 1932. In the 1930s, a regional ideal of cities that respected and enriched their environmental settings had begun to challenge the existing pattern of wasteful and destructive metropolitan expansion. As a more ambitious form of conservation, regionalism focused entire ecosystems and regions rather than single resources. Under the pressure of economic depression, however, a new set of federal urban policies (federal mortgages, highways, tax policies, subsidies) emerged in the late 1930s that encouraged a rapid suburban expansion which superficially resembled regionalism but actually accelerated an environmentally-destructive urban sprawl. Consequently, postwar Americans lived through one of the most dramatic environmental transformations in history.

As bulldozers set to work in both central cities and the surrounding countryside, urban renewal failed to reverse the decay of central cities while the mass production of suburban housing polluted waterways, eroded landscapes, destroyed wildlife habitat, and absorbed prime agricultural land. In their responses to this environmental transformation, postwar Americans developed a new concept of urban sustainability that largely replaced the older regional ideal. Organized around the thesis that we may need to recover some aspects of regionalism, this course connects the environmental history of American cities and suburbs with a cultural and intellectual history that emphasizes the intersection of urban and environmental concerns in the period between 1932 and 1975. Its central argument emphasizes the role of urban narratives and urban
images in our environmental predicament. In conflating cities with certain forms of economic
development and asserting a rigid division between “the city” and “the country,” our urban
narratives and urban images have undercut an appreciation of the benefits of city life and
observed our dependence on the natural world.

In the spirit of the philosophy, politics, and the public honors program, this course is also
informed by the belief that human beings construct their own public and shape their own history.
With that in mind, a previous version of this course result in the creation of a website
(thereologicalcity.com) dedicated to telling the story of urban development in Cincinnati since 1932.
Interested students this semester can develop a paper with an eye to contributing to that
website. I am also open to other suggestions about how interested students might contribute to
the website.

**Texts:** The only required text is Lasch, *Plain Style*, a writing primer dedicated to encouraging
clear and precise prose aimed at general readers. I hope that you will take the primer seriously
and, without blindly following each of its dictates and suggestions, use it to improve your writing
and find your own distinctive voice. All other readings are on Canvas. Not counting the short set
of readings for our first class meeting, there are twenty-one sets of readings, none longer than 75
pages, some considerably shorter than that. These readings are the heart and soul of the course
and I expect you to complete them for each class period *and to be prepared to discuss them.*

**Why is POLI 246 blocked with Hist 408?** There are many college courses that attempt to
integrate students into the political world, to teach them how to campaign effectively and to
understand how to analyze an election. Few courses and programs, however, tackle electoral
politics while simultaneously addressing some of the most pressing issues that face cities and
regions. These issues may never come up in an electoral campaign, but they represent many of
the challenges that we elect officials to address. HIST 408 Constructing the Public is designed to
provide an historical understanding of how these issues have developed and to help you develop
a critical approach to the narratives that have been crafted to address, submerge, or ignore these
issues. Both POLI 246 and HIST 408 also attempt to cultivate the skills of reading, analyzing,
and writing without which you cannot effectively engage the public. In short, these courses go
hand-in-hand.

**The Sophomore Block:** Taken as a whole, these two blocked courses are designed to develop
engaged and informed citizens who are both reflective and effective. Politics requires a
combination of vision and power or, to put it somewhat differently, argument and technique.
Without an argument about where we are and a vision of where we want to go, the most
sophisticated technique, the most effective exercise of power, leads nowhere. Argument and
vision without technique, without power, without a strategy and a means of implementation, are
equally pointless. Vision and power, argument and technique, have to be brought together and
that is what we hope these two linked courses will do. The interaction between vision and power
is not seamless or smooth, nor is one or the other the exclusive terrain of either course. We may
even decide that the political system as presently constituted frustrates our best intentions. Or we
may decide that our visions are impractical and unworkable. But in such tensions lies a good
deal of the learning. We hope the experience will contribute to your ability to merge theory and
practice and to transcend the stifling disciplinary boundaries of the academy. We also hope the
experience will contribute to your development as citizens, people who see the world critically, care enough about the world to engage in public affairs, and try to make a difference

**Student Learning Outcomes for HIST 408**: Students who read the texts, participate in the discussions, and complete the assignments in this course will be able to:

1. Understand and engage current debates about urban sprawl and green urbanism.

2. Construct and evaluate arguments about the costs and benefits of city life.

3. Compare and assess the contrasting visions and policies that shaped urban development in the period after 1932.

4. Describe and assess urban and suburban transformations, including their environmental dimensions, in the period after 1932.

5. Analyze and evaluate the urban narratives and urban images that have shaped our urban and environmental policies.

6. Construct and articulate a vision (in words and images) of future urban development that reduces environmental degradation and enhances city life (or make the case for some alternative vision, including the maintenance of the status quo).

7. Write effective prose in a variety of professional and public formats.

8. Speak clearly and efficiently on complex issues.

**Student Learning Outcomes for the PPP Sophomore Block**: Constructing the Public also contributes to the overall outcomes for the PPP Sophomore block. Students who embrace the opportunities in year-long block of four courses (HIST 408, POLI 246, HIST 300, POLI 329) will find that they have:

9. Developed a love of discussion, debate, and deliberation, a taste for wide and challenging reading in a variety of disciplines, and a desire to do careful scholarship and engaged social criticism

10. Acquired the habits of articulating and questioning their values, being open to new ideas, and connecting their values to their intellectual inquiries

11. Built confidence in their capacity to conduct research and organize a mass of chaotic evidence into an analytical narrative and improved their ability to find sources that can illuminate a contemporary issue

12. Gained an appreciation for past struggles to construct a better society, a humility about the difficulty of changing society, an understanding of the historical context of contemporary issues, and a recognition of their place in an historical continuum, connecting past, present and future.
13. Found ways of putting to constructive use their anger about injustice, their faith in the possibility of social change, their hope for social justice, and their passion for setting things right.


**Course Requirements for HS 408:** Grading is on a 1,000 point scale. The paragraphs on the readings (see below) are due before each day’s class and should be posted on the appropriate discussion board on Blackboard. All other assignments should be loaded to turnitin.com (links are provided on the Blackboard page) by 11:59PM on the due date. Grading rubrics for all assignments can be found on the Blackboard site under Course Content.

A. **Class attendance and participation.** This includes keeping up with the reading and participating on a regular basis in class discussions and producing a written response of at least 100 words to twenty of the assigned reading assignments (none due for August 26 and October 21st assignments). There is a writing prompt (a specific question) included in each reading assignment below. Use this prompt if it is helpful but do not feel limited by it. While these paragraphs do not need to be polished writing, they should provide a foundation for the other writing you will do during the semester (and so you will have a chance to revise those paragraphs). This assignment develops and provides an assessment of student learning outcomes 1-8. (100 points for the paragraphs, 100 points for in-class participation, total of 200 points)

B. **A Portfolio of Writings on regional and urban sprawl since 1932.** This will take the form of three short papers, of approximately 1250-2000 words (roughly 5-8 pages) that are then combined at the end of the semester into a longer paper of at least 5,000 words, (roughly 20 pages). The due dates for these papers are listed below. (100, 150, 150, 200 points respectively, 600 points total). This assignment develops and provides an assessment of student learning outcomes 1-4, and 7. **Please Note:** While my particular take on this issue is environmentally-oriented, yours does not need to be. I think few public officials, policy analysts, or scholars would doubt that the postwar suburbanization of the American metropolis has set many of the challenges we face at the beginning of the 21st century.

   first paper: 9/21 (100 points) ****peer review required (to get you started with your group; see below)
   second paper: 10/13 (150 points) ****peer review required
   third paper: 11/16 (150 points) ****peer review required
   final paper: 12/15 (200 points)

C. **Letter to Organization in City and Region:** A letter, written in a professional manner, to some agency or organization in the metropolitan region that has some relationship the issues we are dealing with in the course. Depending on what comes of the letter, your paper might make extensive or quite limited use of this connection (but in any event, make an effort to include something from this exercise in your paper). The letter should go out no later than September 12th. A polished draft of this letter is due Monday,
September 7th so you need to start this week on identifying your paper topic, or at least your agency or organization. (50 points)

Some of the many (environmentally-oriented) possibilities include Green Umbrella, Civic Garden Center, Cincinnati Green Plan, city of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Quality, Cincinnati Planning Department, Clean Cincinnati, city of Cincinnati Bicycle Transportation Project, Cincinnati Waterworks, the Metropolitan Sewer District, Cincinnati office of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the Water Technology Innovation Cluster, zero-waste retailing (several large firms in the city), PNC Bank green building initiatives, the Land Conservancy of Hamilton County, People Working Cooperatively, Community Land Cooperative of Cincinnati, Paddlefest. Do not feel limited by this list (I’ve taken some obvious choices off simply because students have done them in the past and have posted essays on the website – but that doesn’t rule those out). You can also consult the Green Umbrella web site (http://www.greenumbrella.org/member-organizations) for a list of over 130 affiliated organizations, businesses, government entities, and educational institutions.

D. In-Class Presentations: November 18, November 20, December 2 (50 for group effort, 50 for individual contribution, total of 100 points). This assignment develops and provides an assessment of student learning outcome 8, as well as contributing to 1-6.

I’ll be establishing three groups based on the agency or organization you choose (and so hopefully based on the topics of your papers). You should then keep in touch with other members of your group and begin preparing your end-of-the-semester presentations (the peer review of the short papers should help that process along). These presentations can and should deal with both historical and public policy concerns – in other words, you might organize your presentation as a historically-informed brief for a spring issue to pursue. This is why I have all the presentations due before the common session December 4th where we will settle on an issue.

E. Final Examination. Two parts: 1. Please write a question covering the broad sweep of the semester and then write the opening paragraph of an answer to it. That is due December 14th. Then we will have an oral examination, in the form of a final, in-class discussion, reflecting on the semester’s work (and including some of your questions and answers). Tuesday, December 16th 10:30-12:20. (50 points). This assignment develops student learning outcome 8, as well as contributing to 1-7.

****Late assignments will be penalized at the discretion of the instructor, generally five percent per 24 hours.

Please note the following policy from page 52 of the Xavier University Catalog (the History Department and your instructors take this seriously):

“The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments
and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation.”

“All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own.”

“Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an ‘F’ in the course, and expulsion from the University.”

**Grading Scale:** 92-100 = A, 90-91 = A-, 88-89 = B+, 82-87 = B, 80-81 = B-, 78-79 = C+, 72-77 = C, 70-71 = C-, 68-69 = D+, 62-67 = D, 60-61 = D-, below 60 = F.

**Course Outline and Reading Assignments**

Introduction: Sprawl and Anti-Sprawl: The movement of population out of congested cities into the surrounding countryside had been valorized in the postwar period as a realization of the American dream (especially in single-family housing). The mass production of housing, and the filling of that housing with consumer durables, had also been a crucial component of postwar economic growth and prosperity. But in the last few decades, many have redefined suburbanization as urban sprawl and worried about its social (including racial segregation and the decline of public life) and environmental consequences. Defenders of sprawl have countered by arguing that both residential segregation and suburbanization are the products of democratic choice and that sprawl is a logical and inevitable result of rising prosperity. We will examine some of the key texts in this on-going argument with an eye to clarifying our own evaluation of postwar metropolitan development and our own vision of the future of the city.

**I would recommend you read the materials for any given class in the order listed here.**

August 26 (folder 1 on Canvas): **Invitation to a Public Argument:** What is sprawl and what are the major arguments for and against it? 1. Teaford, “Review Essay – Stopping Sprawl” (4 pages) 2. Register, “As We Build, So Shall We Live,” 5-18, from Ecocities: Building Cities in Balance With Nature (14 pages); 3. “New Urbanism isn’t Just for Liberals – Conversatives Should Embrace it Too,” (5 pages) 4. Sprawl Index for Cincinnati (24 pages, straight forward reading)

Clips: Act of Violence (1949): Trailer + “These Solemn Rites” + (optional) “No Place to Go” (see link at top right of page; on these TCM links, usually if you click the clip you want you can avoid the commercial)

**A Note on the Film Noir Clips:** Consider these movie clips as primary documents. Film noir, a remarkable collection of films from the 1940s and 1950s (and later revivals), gives us unique access to the physical spaces (many since destroyed) of the cities we will be studying. Film noir also records the cultural anxiety about the decay, abandonment, and destruction of central cities and the rise of the suburbanized metropolis. “Too often we forget that the suburb has been built
at a terrifying cost,” a popular study of the city observed in 1955, particularly in “the abandonment of the city, the center of our civilization.” Giving the city a last, long, loving and loathing look, and exploring the rootlessness of its inhabitants, who clung uneasily to the seedy commercialism of the disappearing city or tried to enter, even more uneasily, into the new suburban order, *film noir* called attention to this momentous decision, inviting us to reconsider it. I’ve tried to choose clips that have some connection to the reading material but, beyond that, I want you to have a sense of what film noir is by the time we get to the last section of the course on urban narratives and urban images.

August 28 (folder 2): **Market and Civic Perspectives on Sprawl:** Has sprawl been a product of market forces or public policy? Is there a civic case for or against sprawl? 1. *Bruegman, Sprawl: A Compact History*, 1-13, 202-219 (30); 2. *Lewyn, “Five Myths About Sprawl”* (13; you might not want to print off the twenty pages of footnotes); 3. Sies review of *Bruegman, Sprawl* (5) 4. *Williamson, “Beyond Sprawl and Anti-Sprawl”* (16). (65 pages; the Lewyn article is cluttered with footnotes but straightforward; Williamson might be tough going).

Clip: *Plunder Road* (1957): **final scene** (a bit lengthy but please hang in there; if you are impatient, fast forward to 3:30 of the clip; in any event, ask yourselves, what happened in 1956 which might illuminate this film?) If you get interested, here’s another (optional) link about the film: [Plunder Road Noir of the Week](#)

Optional: **the City of Cincinnati’s page on form based codes** (a new sort of zoning; worth ten minutes poking around)


Clip: *Lady From Shanghai* (1948): **“a bright, guilty world”** (for some reason, the sound is really low on this; remember to turn your sound back down after watching it) + famous mirror scene


Clip: *Phantom Lady* (1944): **Trailer** + **“a space that is neither too insubstantial nor too constricting, neither too anonymous nor too visible”** (the quotation is from something we will read from Dimendberg later in the semester and refers, at least for me, to the neighborhood scene at the end of this six minute clip).

September 9 (folder 5): **What’s the City For? Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Urbanism and Sprawl** What, if anything, are cities good for? 1. ***Whyte, “Urban Sprawl”*** (22) 2. ***Jacobs, “Downtown is For People”*** (17) 3. *Lasch, “Conversation and the Civic*
****The Whyte and Jacobs essays are primary documents, from The Exploding Metropolis (1958), a collection of essays from the editors at Fortune magazine, the preeminent business journal of the day. This volume contains some of the first commentary on sprawl. I’ve scattered several such primary documents – things written in the period we are examining – throughout the readings. They are all marked by asterisks. Virtually all the film clips are also primary documents.

Clip: a few minutes from Whyte’s later research on “the social life of small urban places” : the moveable chair + Here’s the whole thing, one hour, well worth watching

September 11: First Common Session: Regional and Urban Sprawl as Campaign Issue:
Regionalism and Urban Sprawl: If you wanted to inject this issue into the campaign, how would you do it and what might be the electoral consequences? Or If you opponent attempted to inject this issue into the campaign, would you welcome that or not and, in any event, how would you respond and what might be the electoral consequences?

The session will start with a short discussion of these two readings: (folder 6) Why is narrative important? What would a narrative about green urbanism in Cincinnati look like? I. Hoeg, “Why did Narrative Evolve?” (11) 2. Kaufman, “Debbie Does Salad” (6) (17 pages, Hoeg is pretty complicated but mind-expanding)

I’ll also have a small selection of recent articles on sprawl and/or regionalism that can help the discussion. Your product for the session should be 1). A tough question for your electoral opponent on the question of regionalism and urban sprawl. 2.) A fifty-word stump statement (“elevator speech”) on how you would answer that question if your opponent posed it to you. 3.) A bumper sticker/yard sign slogan related to regionalism and urban sprawl.

Part One: The Regional Metropolis: Roads Taken and Not Taken: This section asks whether a viable alternative to mass suburbanization and urban sprawl actually existed. The crucial figure here is Lewis Mumford, a public intellectual with considerable influence, who wrote a magisterial account of “the culture of cities” in 1938. In the last chapters of The Culture of Cities, Mumford gave the fullest and most hopeful account of his lifelong interest in biotechnic regionalism (Mumford borrowed the word biotechnic from his mentor the Scottish biologist/sociologist to describe a technology linked to biological processes and environmental values). With the help of John Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy of democracy, Mumford’s regionalism also implied a fundamentally different political culture than the one actually taking shape in the United States during the 1930s. You may decide, of course, that Mumford’s dream had no real viability or even that his (flawed) dream is now our reality.

Cincinnati Enquirer (July 26, 2012) (2) (40 pages)

Clip: The City (1939) part 1 (17 minutes)

September 18: Second Common Session: Using Maps to Display Information with Dr. Gerberry ~ How can you utilize a map to display information? Why is it useful for you? Can you use it for the public? How can you use maps with the media? How do you create an effective map? What do you want to measure?

Please read this material even though we are having a common session and please post a response: (folder 8): Oil and Soil: The Really Big Picture: To what extent can geopolitics over the past seventy-five years be explained in terms of a struggle over soil and oil? 1. Snyder, “Stalin and Hitler: Mass Murder By Starvation” (10) 2. Yergin, The Prize, selections, 334-346, 351-357, 541-558, 693-696 (42) 3. Manning, “The Oil We Eat” (10) (62 pages – Yergin is dense but don’t worry about all the details, get the big picture)

September 23 (folder 9): The Politics of Regional Development: What were the prospects for (and obstacles to) a regional reorganization of politics in the 1930s and have they changed since? 1. Mumford, “The Politics of Regional Development,” 358-387 (30 pages) 2. Keenan, “An Ecopolitical System of Global Significance,” 210-244 (35) (65; a challenging assignment)

Clip: The City (1939) part 2 (16 minutes)


Clip: The Asphalt Jungle (1950): Trailer + opening scene (yes, that’s Cincinnati’s public landing in the opening and then the Central Trust Building – now PNC building - and Carew Tower )


Clip: The Naked City (1948): opening scene (click “the story of the city” and the ad should stop) + awesome chase through the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.

Part Two: The Development of the Suburbanized Metropolis: This section examines the public policies and market choices that actually drove mass suburbanization and urban renewal. It pays close attention to the automobile and the highway (two key parts of the oil/highways/sprawl/TV complex that dominates so much of American life in this period and ours) and examines the consequences for public transit and for the city. This section also explores how the physical rearrangement of the metropolis led to new political cultures and new
political alignments.

October 2 (folder 12): **Suburbanization and Urban Renewal**: What values and which social groups won and lost in postwar suburbanization and urban renewal? 1. *Fairfield, The Public and Its Possibilities*, 238-267 (30) 2. *Davis, Contested Ground*, 113-149 (37) (67 a challenging assignment – the Davis reading is about Cincinnati’s West End)

Clip: *The Window* (1949): the boy who cried wolf (opening scene) + the city as prison (not actually a clip – I can’t find one – but some stills and a bit of commentary)

October 7: **Third Common Session: Writing and News Packages** ~ How can we write to communicate our ideas clearly? Is there an audience – a public – for serious writing addressing critical issues? If so, how can we reach it? What does the media care about? How can you use this knowledge to better earn media? What makes a good shot for the media? What attracts the media?

October 9: Fall Holiday


Clip: Double Indemnity (1944): trailer + “not fully covered” (sadly I can’t find the full opening; but this is the “hero,” Walter Neff, losing his moral way in the suburbs; the opening includes a scene of the LA street railway system, in disrepair)

October 16\(^{th}\) (folder 14): **The Automobile and the City**: Was the urban parkway a good idea gone wrong or inherently bad to begin with? 1. ****Caro, “One Mile,” from *The Powerbroker*, 839-843, 850-863, 882-894 (32; Caro is an historian but can also be considered a participant in the struggle over urbanism and sprawl in the 1970s); 2. Gandy, “Technological Modernism and the Urban Parkway” from *Concrete and Clay* (37) (69 – perhaps the most challenging or at least time consuming assignment of the semester.)

Clips: Kiss Me Deadly (1955) opening scene + Angels’ Flight and tenements (real short)

October 21 (folder 15) **The Automobile and Mass Transit**: Was the rise of the automobile as the primary means of urban transit a triumph of democracy or a product of conspiracy? (No paragraph due for this one). 1. Bottles, *Los Angeles and the Automobile*, 1-19 2. *Taken for a Ride* (documentary on the automobile and mass transit – I’ll show this in class)

A drive through Bunker Hill in the 1940s: Might have to fast forward through the opening, then just watch a few minutes. Note all the small rooming houses, typical of the low-rent, affordable neighborhoods that disappeared with urban renewal.

Clip: *Killer’s Kiss* (1955): opening (that’s the lost treasure of NYC’s Penn Station Davey’s standing in) + nightmare


Clip: *Ace in the Hole* (1951): trailer + Mr. Federber

**Part Three: Narrative and the Image of the City**: This section examines the urban narratives and images that shaped the period we have been examining. It focuses on all those films noir that we have been sampling over the course of the semester and asks if they played an historical role as something more than innocent amusement and entertainment. What stories did these films tell about cities and suburbs, what images of cities and suburbs did they popularize? Did these narratives and images support, ignore, or question dominant social trends in the period? By thinking seriously about these questions, I hope that we can be more intentional and more creative about the narratives and images of Cincinnati that we produce.


Clips: *Dead End* (1937): trailer + Angels with Dirty Faces (1938): pretzel legs

November 4th: **Election Day: No class**

November 6: (folder 19) **Film Noir and the Built Environment**: What role does the American city (as a specific setting of time and place rather than some abstract and mythical “city”) play in film noir? 1. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 226-236 (11) 2. Dimendberg, *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity*, 1-10, 119-122, 136-140, 148-165 (36; this is chopped up a bit and Dimendberg is a maddeningly obscure writer, but do your best with it) 3. Sobchak, “Lounge Time: Postwar Crisis and the Chronotone of Film Noir,” 137-148, 165-167(14) 3. (61 – challenging reading; film criticism is often pretty opaque stuff, sad to say)

Clip: *Rear Window* (1954): trailer + the film’s “noir” moment

November 11th (folder 20) **Los Angeles, Film Noir, and Postmodern Urbanism** What is the relationship between the development of Los Angeles, on the one hand, and film noir and postmodern urbanism, on the other? 1. Davis, *City of Quartz*, 24-46 (23) 2. Eaton, *Chinatown*


November 18: Group One Presentation

November 20: Group Two Presentation

November 25: **Chinatown (1974)**: screening of the film. I hope you will be in class but if you cannot be here, please make a point of seeing the film.

November 27: Thanksgiving: No class

December 2: Group Three Presentation

December 4: ****Fourth Block Class: Select the Spring Issue


December 11: Recap