

## HISTORY 410: TOPICS IN TRANSNATIONAL URBAN HISTORY

Thursday, 4.15-6.45, Dumbach Hall, room 124

Instructor: Prof. Aidan Forth, [aforth@luc.edu](mailto:aforth@luc.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 10-12, Crown Center 546



This class exposes students to the history of cities across a broad spectrum of time and space. Our level of analysis is both larger and more local than traditional narratives framed by the nation state. With a close attention to place, we examine the construction of civic identities, the policing of social behavior and the scope for new practices of selfhood in the anonymous arena of the modern city. We are interested in the contribution of cities to the building of the modern world: in terms of trade and industry; consumer and political culture; the formation of diverse categories of gender, race and class; technology and built form; and practices of power and social control. Our canvas is a large one: we travel from east to west, from north to south, from metropole to colony, from capital to port. We visit leading “global cities” like London, Paris, New York, and Tokyo. We walk oriental streets in Shanghai, Mumbai, and Jakarta. Our home city of Chicago features in discussions of industrialization, environmental management, and racial segregation. Always our focus is on connection and interchange. How are cities built by global interactions, and how do they contribute—as entrepôts of trade, as receptacles for migrants—to the forces of globalization? Finally, how does a comparative and global approach shed new light on concepts like “modernity,” industrialization, “freedom” and diversity that have patterned our own (western) historical trajectories?

## GRADING

- 25% 5-sentence summaries of readings each week
- 25% Class participation (includes leading or co-leading at least two class discussions)
- 15% Book review (4-5 pages)
- 35% Final essay (~15 pages).

100% Total

**It is crucial that you finish the assigned readings for each class and come ready with thoughtful questions and comments. At the *beginning* of each class, please turn in a 5-sentence summary** of the reading for that week. This will help focus your thoughts for class discussion and will prove very useful when it comes time for field exams.

**Participation in class is fundamental** to your intellectual and professional development, and accounts, accordingly, for an important component of your final grade. **Each discussion will be lead or co-lead by one of you. Class leaders should meet with me before class to discuss the main questions and topics relevant to the reading.**

**The book review should be on one of the assigned readings.** You will be expected to provide a critical (though not necessarily negative) assessment of the book's historiographical contribution and analysis of evidence. This will be due at the beginning of the class in which the book is discussed. **Try not to leave this to the last week!**

**Please consult with me for the final paper.** I recommend you produce a historiographical review essay that further examines a theme discussed in class by incorporating outside readings. PhD students have the option of producing an annotated syllabus on a topic related to the themes of this course for use in academic job applications. On a case-by-case basis I may permit you to write a research paper on a topic that intersects with the themes of this course, though be warned that this may entail much more work than the other two options.

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## CLASS SCHEDULE

### January 15

Tim Gilfoyle, "White Cities, Linguistic Turns, and Disneylands: The New Paradigms of Urban History," *Reviews in American History* 26(1), 1998.

C.A. Bayly et al, "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History." *The American Historical Review* 111(5), 2006. **CR**

Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and its Prospects* (Mariner Books, 1968), chapters 1-2, 11-18. **CR**

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## MODERN CITIES

### January 22

Robert Bucholz and Joseph Ward, *London: A Social and Cultural History, 1550-1750* (University of Cambridge Press, 2012), Introduction, chapters 1-2, 5-8, Conclusion.

James Vernon, *Distant Strangers: How Britain Became Modern* (University of California Press, 2014), chapters 1-2.

### January 29

David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (Routledge, 2005).

James White, *Mirrors of Memory: Cultural, Politics, and Time in Paris and Tokyo* (University of Virginia Press, 2011), chapter 4. **CR**

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 53-63. **CR**

### February 5

Harold Platt, *Shock Cities: The Environmental Transformation and Reform of Manchester and Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Mark Whitehead, "Cities: Sprawl and the Urban Planet," *Environmental Transformations: A Geography of the Anthropocene* (Routledge, 2014), pp. 99-119. **CR**

### February 12

Alisa Freedman, *Tokyo in Transit: Japanese Culture on the Rails and Road* (Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 1-224.

Michel de Certeau, "Railway Navigation and Incarceration," *The Practice of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 2011), pp. 111-115. **CR**

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## DISCIPLINARY CITIES

### February 19

Frederic Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai, 1927-37* (University of California Press, 1996).

### February 26

Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800-1910* (University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Patrick Joyce, *Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (Verso, 2003), Introduction, chapter 2. **CR**

Michel Foucault, "On Governmentality" in Burchell, Gordon and Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 87-104. **CR**

**SPRING BREAK NO CLASS ON MARCH 5!**

**March 12**

Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (University of California Press, 1997).

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (Yale University Press, 1999), chapter 4.

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**COLONIAL CITIES****March 19**

Rudolf Mrazek, *Engineers in Happy Land: Technology and Nationalism in a Colony* (Princeton University Press, 2002).

Michel de Certeau "Walking in the City," in *Practices of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 2011), pp. 91-110. **CR**

**March 26**

Tristram Hunt, *Cities of Empire: The British Colonies and the Creation of the Urban World* (Metropolitan Books, 2014).

**EASTER BREAK NO CLASS ON APRIL 2!****April 9**

Preeti Chopra, *A Joint Enterprise: Indian Elites and the Making of British Bombay* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

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**DIVERSE CITIES****April 16**

Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (Basic Books, 1995).

**April 23**

Jordan Stranger-Ross, *Staying Italian: Urban Change and Ethnic Life in Postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* (University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Carl Nightingale, *Segregation: A Global History of Divided Cities* (University of Chicago Press, 2012), chapters 8-11. **CR**

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**Final papers due Thursday April 30th**