

Urban processes

François Bonnet

The course aims at providing a general overview of urban sociology; an introduction to core notions such as urban economics, segregation, ethnicity, stratification, crime, urban riots, local social policy, urban politics, etc.; and to systematically compare US and French perspectives on the same issues. Field trips in Paris will be organized to train students to match concepts and theories with everyday experience.

Evaluation:

- An oral presentation in class on an assigned reading (Friday) (20%)
- An oral presentation of a news event related to urban issues (Friday) (20%)
- An in-class mid-term exam (about the texts) (30%)
- A final take-home exam (about the field trips) (30%)

Classes will take place on Tuesday and on Friday.

Tuesdays last 1 hour and focus on learning theories, concepts and facts about the week's theme.

Fridays last 2 hours and focus on group discussion: presentation and discussion of assigned readings, discussion about news events, and field trips.

Part 1. Introduction

1. Course outlook

Tuesday 9/16: Presentation, introduction to basic notions of the social sciences

Friday 9/19: Introduction to the field of urban sociology, introduction to space and behavior

Reading: Gieryn Thomas (2000), "A Space for Place in Sociology", *Annual Review of Sociology*

2. Urbanization

Historical perspectives on the urbanization of Western societies

Tuesday 9/23: Le Galès Patrick (2002), *European Cities. Social Conflicts and Governance*, Oxford : Oxford University Press, chapter 1

Friday 9/26: Engels Friedrich (1845), "The Great Towns", in *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*

4. Urban theory

Introduction to urban theory: ecological and political economy perspectives.

Tuesday 9/30: Gottdiener and Hutchinson, *The New Urban Sociology*, chapter 3 and 4

Friday 10/3: Field trip to Belleville, a vibrant neighborhood of Paris where Tunisians, Asians, and Africans coexist along with working-class and upper-class white French

Part 2. White flight and secession

3. Race, ethnicity and class in the city

Introduction to concepts of stratification and race relationships.

Tuesday 10/7: Elias N. (1965), "Theoretical introduction" in *The Established and the Outsiders*

~~Friday 10/10~~

5. White flight and secession

Suburbanization and white flight

Tuesday 10/14: Jackson Kenneth T., « All the World's a Mall : Reflections on the Social and Economic Consequences of the American Shopping Center », *American Historical Review*, 101 (4), October 1996, pp. 1111-1121

Friday 10/17: Pritchett Wendell (2002), "Racial change in a progressive neighborhood", in *Brownsville, Brooklyn. Blacks, Jews and the Changing Face of the Ghetto*. Chicago: Chicago University Press

Part 3. Segregation

6. Dynamics of residential segregation

Concept of segregation. Explanations of segregation. Segregation of the rich (gated communities) and of the poor (banlieues, ghettos).

Tuesday 10/21: Massey Douglas and Nancy Denton (1998), *American Apartheid*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, chapter 1

Friday 10/24: Venkatesh S.A. (2006), *Off the Books. The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Prologue and Introduction

~~10/28~~

~~10/31~~

7. Field trip: the 16th arrondissement

~~Tuesday 11/4~~

Friday 11/7: Field trip to one of the richest Parisian neighborhood. Special attention will be dedicated to architecture and inequality.

8. The underground economy, crime and policing

Introduction to urban problems related to crime and its control.

~~Tuesday 11/11~~

Friday 11/14: Mike Davis, *City of quartz*, "Fortress City"
In-class written exam

9. Social problems, continued: urban riots

Tuesday 11/18: Katz M.B. (2008), “Why Don't American Cities Burn Very Often?”, *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 185-208

Friday 11/21: Field trip to a poor, minority neighborhood in the north of Paris with various social and criminal problems.

Part 4. Gentrification

10. Perspectives on gentrification: Economic vs. cultural theories

Debates and controversies about gentrification (positive and negative aspects, consumption vs. production theory)

Tuesday 11/25: Davis M. (1992), *City of Quartz*, « The Junkyard of Dreams »

Friday 11/28: Field trip to a recently gentrified area: Bagnolet

11. The transformations of urban welfare

Tuesday 12/2: Slater T. (2006), “The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research”, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30 (4), December, pp. 737–57

Friday 12/5: Marwell N.P. (2004), « Privatizing the Welfare State: Nonprofit Community Based Organizations as Political Actors », *American Sociological Review*, 69 (2), pp. 265-291

Part 5. Coping with urban problems

12. Urban politics, urban policy and civil society

Local politics, “politique de la ville”, social movements, NGOs.

Tuesday 12/9: Stone C. (1996), « Urban Political Machines : Taking Stock », *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 29 (3), September

Friday 12/12: Michael Gecan, *Going Public. An Organizer's guide to citizen action*, Anchor Books, chapitre 2: “The world as it is”