

U.S. Urban History

HIS 304/504

Spring 2005

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Cleveland State University

Class Meetings: MC 322 MWF 8:30-9:35 AM

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Introduction

This course considers the development of American cities from pre-colonial times to the present, focusing especially on the formation and evolution of the physical urban environment, social interactions in urban settings, political and economic development in cities, urban growth and decline, suburbanization, and responses to urban decay. Throughout the course we will not only explore urban development but will connect it to the broader patterns of American social, cultural, political, and economic history. The course examines a number of different cities—especially New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Boston, Baltimore, Detroit, New Orleans, and Atlanta. We will also explore the experiences of Cleveland in the context of national trends.

Purpose, Method, and Format

In this course we will develop a number of useful skills that reinforce our study of American urban history. In addition to the expected concentration on developing skills such as engaged reading, critical thinking, and writing with clarity, organization, and a sustained thesis, we will explore urban history by using a variety of materials beyond scholarly works, including newspaper editorials, popular magazine articles, web sites, popular and documentary films, editorial cartoons, and even comic strips. We will also learn how to “read” the landscape of Cleveland—both as a class and individually through the course project—to determine what it can tell us about urban change and continuity. Reading the landscape means turning to more than simply reading books and articles. It involves examining historical and contemporary photos, postcards, maps, city directories, and census records, as well as actually viewing your subject on-site.

In class meetings, you should expect a mixture of lecture and discussion. Lectures will include a visual component, using either Powerpoint or conventional photographic slides. Class discussions will revolve around assigned reading. Occasionally we will also view portions of films.

Required Texts

Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

We will use this book as a reference work to guide us in thinking about the urban built environment and how it evolves over time to suit people's changing needs and tastes. You should use it to contextualize your study of the Euclid Corridor.

Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *Merchant of Illusion: James Rouse, America's Salesman of the Businessman's Utopia* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004).

This book examines the projects and ideas of famed urban planner James Rouse. It explores how Rouse, known primarily for his pioneering "festival marketplaces" in Boston and Baltimore, shaped the role of the private sector in American urban policy. Bloom evaluates Rouse's projects—shopping centers, planned communities, downtown redevelopment projects, community development corporations, and festival marketplaces—in the context of cold war ideology. The kinds of projects that Rouse helped develop became the U.S.'s alternative to state-dominated urban planning in the Soviet Union and social democratic Europe. We will use this book as a window into the ways that planners sought to reverse the urban decline that characterized the second half of the twentieth century.

Kenneth W. Goings and Raymond A. Mohl, eds., *The New African American Urban History* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 1996).

A corrective to earlier studies that tended to depict African Americans as powerless victims of white racism and urban problems, this book is a collection of essays that focuses on the ways that blacks have taken active roles in carving out spaces for themselves, struggling against the problems they face, and managed to create a sense of dignity in urban America. We will use this book to provide a sense of black perspectives and as a counterpoint to standard texts about different periods in U.S. urban history.

M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

From the front and back flaps: "In *Mall Maker*, the first biography of this visionary spirit, M. Jeffrey Hardwick relates Gruen's successes and failures—his work at the 1939 World's Fair, his makeover of New York's Fifth Avenue boutiques, his rejected plans for reworking entire communities, . . . and his crowning achievement, the enclosed shopping mall. Throughout, Hardwick illuminates the dramatic shifts in American culture during the mid-twentieth century, notably the rise of suburbia and automobiles, the death of downtown, and the effect these changes had on American life. Gruen championed the redesign of suburbs and cities through giant shopping malls, earnestly believing that he was promoting an American ideal, the ability to build a community. Yet, as malls began covering the landscape and downtowns became more depressed, Gruen became painfully aware that his dream of overcoming social problems through architecture and commerce was slipping away. By the tumultuous year of 1968, it had disappeared."

Additional articles and book chapters are available on **Electronic Course Reserve (ECR)** http://scholar.csuohio.edu/screens/m_course.html or on **JSTOR** <http://www.ulib.csuohio.edu/tips/jstor.shtml>. All are PDF files. The computer lab on the fourth floor of Main Classroom Building offers free printing. You should always bring a copy of any required reading to class on the day for which it is assigned.

Recommended Supplementary Reading

Carol Poh Miller and Robert A. Wheeler, *Cleveland: A Concise History, 1796-1996* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

The definitive biography of the city of Cleveland, Miller and Wheeler's book offers a sweeping narrative and analysis of Cleveland's development. I recommend this as your starting point for understanding how your project topics fit into broader context.

Assignments

1. Euclid Corridor History Project.	65%
Landscape Essay	5%
Timeline Essay/Source Collection	10%
Two Oral Histories	10%
People Essay	10%
Interpretive Essay	25%
Project Binder	5%

The Euclid Corridor History Project is a collaboration of the CSU Department of History, Cleveland Public Art, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, and Ideastream (WVIZ and WCPN) as part of the public art component of the larger Euclid Corridor Transportation Project. Successive history classes are contributing historical documentation of the history of Euclid Avenue between Public Square and East Cleveland to support this important urban revitalization effort. Each of you in this course will research a neighborhood immediately surrounding one of the approximately thirty stations along RTA's planned Silver Line (Euclid Avenue between Public Square and Windermere Station in East Cleveland), demonstrating how it reflects selected topics covered in the course. You will be building upon the foundation laid by last semester's Introduction to Public History course, whose students prepared binders on each of the RTA's seven designated segments along the Euclid Corridor. These binders will provide useful context for your narrower project topic.

Completing the project in this course is a very challenging task. It demands that you complete a variety of straightforward tasks and assignments in a timely and systematic fashion. In order to facilitate the development of the project—and introduce you to the research and critical-thinking process, the course is designed to lead you through those steps in a simple and methodical fashion. Also, your work is cumulative over the course of the semester, so that at the end of the semester. As a result, you will not only have compiled (and received instructor review of) a body of research and writing for your project that will become part of the final interpretive essay and research binder.

Given the nature of the project, it is critical that you complete each step/assignment along the way in a complete and timely fashion. The most significant barrier to successful completion of the course project (and student achievement in terms of grading) is procrastination and/or falling behind the course schedule.

The project will be divided into six phases, each with a corresponding due date. While this may seem overwhelming at first, bear in mind that many course projects simply ask for a lengthy research at the end of the semester, often leading students to procrastinate until it is too late. You will find that, if you give proper attention to your source collection and the approximately 11 pages of preliminary essays, your final paper will virtually “write itself.”

- a.) **Landscape Essay.** After selecting your topic, which you must do by sending me an email message during the first week and receiving my confirmation, visit your sites. Note what you see. What is there? What isn't? How do people use the site? What sorts of people use it? And, what intrigues you? Keep course readings in mind as you visit the site. Then prepare a 3-page descriptive essay in which you describe your sites and their surrounding urban landscapes. Be sure to include observations on the physical appearance of your sites and their surroundings as well as your thoughts on who frequents these areas and how these places might have evolved through time. Feel free to guess! This is a time for noting your observations—“reading” the urban landscape in the most basic way.

- b.) **Timeline Essay/Source Collection.** Assemble images, maps, city directory pages, and any other relevant primary materials pertaining to your chosen sites and their surrounding vicinities. Also, locate scholarly books and articles that provide general or comparative context for one or more course topics that correspond to the changes observed at your sites. These topics would likely include but not be limited to industrialization, immigration, deindustrialization, population flight/suburbanization, and renewal/revitalization. Prepare an annotated bibliography on these sources. An annotated bibliography includes a brief description (one to several sentences) of how the source relates to your project. Finally, prepare a 4-page analytical essay in which you “narrate” a timeline of the changes in your sites and their surrounding urban landscapes, drawing upon all relevant primary sources (in other words, not including scholarly books and articles) in the source collection. In writing your essay, consider some of the following questions. Did your site change over time or not? How would you characterize change? Was it gradual or did it seem to happen suddenly? Do the changes within a time period seem related in any way? How about from one time to another? Can you see any patterns to the changes? Do you have any hunches about what caused specific changes? If there is great continuity, how would you explain that sameness over time? Are there differences between the physical site and its human construction?

- c.) **Two Oral Histories.** Following our in-class oral history workshop, you will schedule and conduct two approximately 60-90 minute, tape-recorded interviews. On each of them you will work with another student in Professor Tebeau's Local History

Seminar. One interview will pertain directly to your project, during which the other student will assist, and the other will pertain directly to his/her project, during which you will assist. These oral histories should be conducted in March and April, respectively, but you are encouraged to get them both finished well before the due dates. On each due date, you will submit your completed release form, properly labeled cassette tape, interview transcript, and evaluative statement. Your interview must be competently conducted and fully documented according to the procedures outlined here and in the workshop in order to get credit. The Department of History will provide equipment and release forms for your interviews.

- d.) People Essay.** Prepare a 4-page analytical essay in which you draw upon your primary sources (including census data for the city and/or tract level) to “narrate” a timeline of the changing relationship of people to the sites you are studying. In other words, how have people used the sites over time? Who lives/lived or works/worked nearby? What roles do these places seem to play for people?
- e.) Interpretive Essay.** Prepare a 10-12 page analytical essay that places their sites into the context of selected topics covered in the course, citing both primary and secondary sources (and including interviews as appropriate). The purpose of this essay is to give you an opportunity to combine all of the research and writing you will have done during the semester and relate just how it all fits together. Your essay should reflect on changes over time within the site, their causes, and their significance. What has changed and what has remained constant and why? How do all the things you have learned and observed contribute to the sense of the place today? What may they portend for the future? In other words, write an analytical history of your site. Discuss its origins, uses, and its people. What changed or did not change? In what ways has it been altered; how did people make use of the past; how are they preparing for the future? What is the principle story of your site; its ancillary stories? Every site has many stories. Tell the story or stories that seems most significant and/or interesting to you – and which reflects your ability to read the landscape.
- f.) Final Course Project.** You should store your project materials in a 1 1/2- or 2-inch, three-ring binder (widely available at bookstores, pharmacies, office supply stores, and discount stores). The binder should include all materials for the project (organized with essays appearing first, followed by an appendix of supporting source materials) and should reflect revision based on comments provided at each stage of the project. The purpose of submitting a set of revised work is twofold: first, to develop a scholarly habit of responding to constructive criticism and, second, to present a refined product that will be used as a reference for urban planners, historians, and artists in a major urban revitalization initiative.

2. Reading Journal. 35%

For each reading assignment I will provide, in advance, on the course website a question or questions for your consideration as you read. You should keep a journal in which to record your responses to assigned questions pertaining to course readings. You may type or neatly print your answers. I strongly encourage you to write down anything else that strikes you as important as you read. Writing as you read and after you read encourages good analytical skills and careful reading, as well as promotes a higher level of engagement in class. This assignment is in lieu of exams, and so you should take it very seriously as I will ask you to submit it at midterm (for 15% of your final grade) and on the final day of class (for the remaining 20%). The Euclid Corridor project relates to this portion of the course requirements in two ways. First, the project serves as a highly visible and immediately relevant case study for trends and developments that have occurred in many other American cities. Second, our study of national urban history through course readings and class meetings helps us bring a broader perspective to what might otherwise remain purely “local history.” In this manner we are emulating the way that professional historians approach their craft—either seeking specificity in our understanding of broad trends or broad trends emerging from our specific subjects of study.

Academic Integrity

Using someone else’s ideas or phrasing and representing those ideas or phrasing as our own, either on purpose or through carelessness, is a serious offense known as plagiarism. “Ideas or phrasing” includes written or spoken material ranging from whole papers and paragraphs to sentences and phrases. “Someone else” can mean a professional source, such as a published writer or critic in a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or journal; an electronic resource such as material we discover on the World Wide Web; another student at our school or anywhere else; and a paper-writing “service” (online or otherwise) which offers to sell written papers for a fee.

Source: Capitol Community College’s guide to plagiarism (based on the MLA style):
<http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml>

Schedule

A * denotes readings available on Electronic Course Reserve (ECR).

A “G & M” denotes readings available in Goings and Mohl, *The New African American Urban History*.

Readings should be completed before the date under which they are listed.

Week 1

Wed., Jan. 19

Course Introduction

Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, “Lares and Penates” (handout)

Fri., Jan. 21

Thinking About Cities

* Mumford, “What Is a City?”

* Mohl, "New Perspectives on American Urban History"
Project for Public Spaces <http://www.pps.org/gps>

Week 2

Mon., Jan. 24

Reading the Urban Landscape

Brand, *How Buildings Learn*, viii-87 (lots of pictures!)

Wed., Jan. 26

Memory and Urban History

* Hayden, "Place Memory and Urban Preservation"

G & M: Lewis, "Connecting Memory, Self, and the Power of Place"

Fri., Jan. 28

Introduction to Euclid Corridor Project

DUE (via Email): Site Selection

Week 3

Mon., Jan. 31

Colonial Seaports

* Nash, "The Social Evolution of Preindustrial American Cities"
"Early Cities of the Americas"

<http://www.common-place.org/vol-03/no-04/>

Wed., Feb. 2

The Development of Urban Networks

* Chudacoff and Smith, "Commercialization and Urban Expansion"

* Pred, "Biography Formation"

Fri., Feb. 4

The Urban Social Order

* Ryan, "The American Parade"

* Powers, "The 'Poor Man's Friend'"

* Peiss, "Leisure and Labor"

DUE: Landscape Essay

Week 4

Mon., Feb. 7

The Perilous City: Crime, Fire, and Disorder

* Duis, "Saloon Crime"

* Tebeau, "Re-Imagining the Urban Landscape"

Wed., Feb. 9

The Urban Park and Sanitary Movements

* Peterson, "Sanitary Reform and Landscape Values"

Fri., Feb. 11

The Rise of Urban-Industrial America

* Cronon, "Annihilating Space: Meat" and "The Busy Hive"

Week 5

Mon., Feb. 14

The Rise of Downtown

* Fogelson, "The Business District"

Wed., Feb. 16

The Immigrant City

* Chudacoff and Smith, "Newcomers and the Urban Core"

* Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*

<http://www.yale.edu/amstud/inforev/riis/title.html>

Any 3 chapters (very short)

Fri., Feb. 18

The Emergence of Urban Mass Culture

* Barth, "The Department Store"

DUE: Timeline Essay/Source Collection

Week 6

Mon., Feb. 21

Wed., Feb. 23

Fri., Feb. 25

President's Day–No Class**The Rise of Urban Tourism**

* Cocks, “Why Not Visit Chicago?” and “The Noble Spectacle”

Oral History Workshop**Week 7**

Mon., Feb. 28

Wed., Mar. 2

Fri., Mar. 4

Urban Expositions and the City Beautiful

* Kolson, “Cleveland as City Beautiful”

* Peterson, “Civic Art, 1890-1900”

Political Machines and Progressive Reform

* Chudacoff and Smith, “City Politics in the Era of Transformation” and “Refashioning the Social and Physical Environment”

African Americans in the Urban South

G & M: Brown and Kimball, “Mapping the Terrain of Black Richmond”

G & M: Hunter, “Domination and Resistance ... in New South Atlanta”

Week 8

Mon., Mar. 7

Wed., Mar. 9

Fri., Mar. 11

Mar. 13-20

The Great Migration

G & M: Hine, “Black Migration to the Urban Midwest”

* Wiese, “Who Set You Flowin’?”

American Cities and Suburbs in the 1920s

* Fogelson, “The Central Business District”

* Stilgoe, “Forest Hills Gardens” and “Shaker Heights”

Ethnic Responses to Urban Mass Culture

* Cohen, “Encountering Mass Culture”

DUE: Reading Journal**Spring Break–No Classes****Week 9**

Mon., Mar. 21

Wed., Mar. 23

Fri., Mar. 25

The American City in Depression and War

* Biles, “The New Deal in Dallas”

* Lotchin, *The Martial Metropolis*, excerpt**Downtown in Depression and War**

* Fogelson, “The Specter of Decentralization”

Federal Housing Policy in Depression and War

* Jackson, “Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream” and “The Cost of Good Intentions”

Week 10

Mon., Mar. 28

Wed., Mar. 30

Victor Gruen and the Urban FutureHardwick, *Mall Maker*, 1-7, 48-90 (skim 8-47)**The American City in the 1950s**

* Read either Johns, “The Downtown” or “The Neighborhoods”

- Fri., Apr. 1 **Open Day–Optional Euclid Corridor Workshop**
- Week 11**
- Mon., Apr. 4 **Creating the Crabgrass Frontier: Postwar Suburbanization**
 * Cohen, “Residence: Inequality in Mass Suburbia”
 * Jackson, “The Drive-In Culture of Contemporary America”
- Wed., Apr. 6 **DUE: People Essay/Oral History #1**
The New Main Street: Shopping Malls
 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 118-161
 Gladwell, “The Terrazzo Jungle”
http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?fact/040315fa_fact1
- Fri., Apr. 8 **Suburban Alchemy: Planned Suburbs**
 * Bloom, “Columbia, Maryland” and “The Shame of the Suburbs”
- Week 12**
- Mon., Apr. 11 **Urban Renewal**
 Bloom, *Merchant of Illusion*, 1-106
- Wed., Apr. 13 **Origins of the Urban Crisis**
 JSTOR: Sugrue, “Crabgrass-Roots Politics”
 * Mohl, “Making the Second Ghetto in Metropolitan Miami”
- Fri., Apr. 15 **African Americans in City and Suburb Since 1945**
 G & M: Kusmer, “African Americans in the City Since World War II”
 * Wiese, “Something Old, Something New”
- Week 13**
- Mon., Apr. 18 **The Urban Preservation Movement**
 Hodder, “Savannah’s Changing Past”
- Wed., Apr. 20 **The Suburbanization of the City**
 * Menking, “From Tribeca to Triburbia”
 * Smith, “New City, New Frontier”
- Fri., Apr. 22 **The Entertainment City**
 Bloom, *Merchant of Illusion*, 150-180
 * Souther, “Making ‘America’s Most Interesting City’”
- Week 14**
- Mon., Apr. 25 **Open Day—Optional Euclid Corridor Workshop**
- Wed., Apr. 27 **Postindustrial Urban Decay**
 * Teaford, “The Making of the Rust Belt”
 “The Fabulous Ruins of Detroit” <http://detroityes.com/home.htm>
- Fri., Apr. 29 **Urban Futures?: Edge Cities, Technoburbs, New Urbanism**
 * Fishman, “Beyond Suburbia: The Rise of the Technoburb”
 * Hayden, “Nostalgia and Futurism”
- DUE: Interpretive Essay Draft/Oral History #2**

Week 15

Mon., May 2

New Migrations

* Wiese, "The Next Great Migration"

* Mohl, "Blacks and Hispanics in Multicultural America"

Wed., May 4

Reflecting on the Euclid Corridor Project**DUE: Reading Journal**

Fri., May 6

Walking Tour: Lower Euclid/Playhouse Square/Quadrangle

Meet at Public Square, 8:15 AM. Our tour will last approximately 1 1/2 to 2 hours, but those needing to attend a 9:45 AM class may break away and return to campus at 9:30 AM.

Fri., May 13

DUE: Final Course Project**Potential Euclid Corridor Research Sites**

Apartment Buildings: any 2-3 sites, past or present

Arcades: The Arcades, Colonial Arcade

Case Western Reserve University: any 2-3 buildings/spaces

Churches A: East Mt. Zion, Liberty Hill

Churches B: Calvary, St. Agnes

Churches C: St. Paul's, First Church

Cleveland Cultural Gardens

Cleveland Museum of Art/Wade Oval

Cleveland State University: any 2-3 buildings

Cleveland Trust Company

Clubs: Tavern Club, City Club, Union Club, University Club

Department Stores: any 2-3 stores (including subsequent occupants of spaces)
(Halle's, Higbee's, May, Sterling-Lindner-Davis)

Doan Brook: any 2-3 locations along the waterway

Downtown Restaurants/Stores: any 2-3 business addresses

East Cleveland A: any 2-3 buildings/spaces, past or present

East Cleveland B: any 2-3 buildings/spaces, past or present

(City Hall, Windermere Presbyterian Church, Euclid/Superior intersection, Windermere transit station, Owens Plantation, 13231-13233 Euclid, Euclid Avenue R.R. Station at 12107 Euclid, Shaw High School, DeBoe House at 14920 Euclid, St. Philomena Church, 13401-13405 Euclid commercial buildings, Nela Park, funeral homes)

Hospitals: Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals

Hotels: any 2-3 hotel sites, past (Allerton, Carter, Cleveland, Colonial, Euclid, Euclid Logan, Fern Hall, Hollenden, Majestic, Morland, New Amsterdam, Regent, Sahara, Statler)
or present (Holiday Inn Select, Wyndham)

Industrial Buildings: any 2-3 buildings (Rose Iron Works, Woolex)

Infrastructure A: East 55th/Nickel Plate R.R.

Infrastructure B: Public Transit on Euclid Avenue

Intersections A: any 2 consecutively listed intersections with Euclid

Intersections B: any 2 consecutive listed intersections with Euclid

(E. 6th & E. 9th; E. 12th & E. 18th; E. 30th & E. 36th; E. 40th & E. 55th; E. 66th & E. 79th; E. 100th & E. 105th)

Karamu House

Lakeview Cemetery

League Park

Mansions A: any 2-3 sites formerly occupied by mansions

Mansions B: any 2-3 present-day mansions

Neighborhood Businesses A: any 2-3 past or present sites in 1 of 7 corridor zones

Neighborhood Businesses B: any 2-3 past or present sites in 1 of 7 corridor zones

New Urbanism: Beacon Place near E. 81st Street

Performance Venues A: Severance Hall, Euclid Tavern

Performance Venues B: The Arena, Agora Theater

Performance Venues C: any 2-3 Playhouse Square theaters

Playhouse Square: any 2-3 non-theater sites

Public Square: the space itself

Skyscrapers A: Williamson/BP Buildings

Skyscrapers B: Terminal Tower, Key Tower

Union Halls: any 2-3 buildings

Urban Renewal: Erieview