

Latin American Cities

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DAY and Times
Classroom:
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In the last decades, Latin America, has been undergoing rapid urbanization, not unlike most developing regions across the world. Today, most people live in cities than anywhere else before in history, while Latin America is increasingly recognized as a continent made up of “countries of cities,” where the number of intermediary cities is growing at faster rates than in the United States and Europe. Yet the dominant image and scholarship on Latin American has yet to caught up with this reality. The dominant trend has been to focus on indigenous or traditional communities –which are always imagined as rural and authentic, rather than modern and urbanized. Additionally, when cities are theorized it is often as the subject of pathology, social ills or urban blight. Seldom do we analyze cities and urbanization processes as key engines of modernization and debates around citizenship, democracy and national identity, or as creative hubs where some of the major social transformations in the area are taking place. This course will address this void. We will examine the current transformation apace across Latin American cities involving rapid urbanization, the growth of neoliberal developments and the transformation of creative industries and economies across the region. We will focus on post 1980s transformations when we see new modes of globalization across the region that presented new openings but also constrains in regards to the development of enclave urbanism, new types of segregation and new imaginaries of class and “urban” identities. Topics include the rise of tourism and creative economies – such as around art and media; Latin American urban design and new urbanisms; the neoliberalization of labor and the rise of informal economies, and immigration. We also touch on how Latin American immigration is transforming urban imaginaries in the major cities across the United States. Readings will be drawn from geography, urban studies, anthropology and cultural studies.

Requirements: four response papers 3-4 pages, a midterm essay, and a final exam.

Grading:

Response papers: 60 (15% each)

Midterm: 10%

Final: 20%

Attendance and Participation: 10%

All Readings are available through NYU Classes OR online through Bobst Library.

Below are books recommended for purchase, Two of which (*asterisked) are also available online through Bobst Library:

*Zaire Dinzey, *Locked In, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City*

*Arlene Davila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos and the Neoliberal City*

*Browdyn Fishr et al. *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Latin America.*

Justin McGuirk, *Radical Cities: Latin America in Search for a New Architecture.*

Week of September 2

Thursday: Introduction

Week of September 7 What Makes a City?

Lewis Mumford, “What is a City”

Angel Rama, *The Lettered City* (Chapters in NYU classes)

Week of September 14 Bridging Culture & Urban Planning

Review website: <http://www.enactedenvironment.com/> and read the following essays by James Rojas: "Why Urban Planners Should Work With Artists" "On Fences, Plazas, and Latino Urbanism: A Conversation with James Rojas." AND "Looking for the Rasquache at Mariachi Plaza in Boyle Heights."

Thursday, visit by James Rojas, urban planner and author

Response Paper #1 Due

Week of September 21th

Ordinary Places, Extraordinary Events: Citizenship, Democracy and Public Space in Latin America

by Irazábal, Clara, Read Prologue: Ordinary Places, Extraordinary Events in Latin America and Chapter 1, Citizenship, Democracy and Public Space in Latin America. Book available online through NYU Library.

Week of September 28th Enclaves, Security and the Racial Politics of Urbanization

Zaire Dinzey: "Locked in, Locked Out", Introduction and Chapter 1 and 2.

Week of October 5

Tom Agnotti, Introduction: Latin American Perspectives, *Urban Latin America : Violence, Enclaves, and Struggles for Land*, Latin American Perspectives 2013 40: 5. FIND TEXT HERE: <http://lap.sagepub.com/content/40/2/5.full>

Cities in Latin America, More Inequality: Book Review Essay by Tom Agnotti. FIND TEXT HERE:

https://tomangotti.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/cities-in-latin-america_more-inequality.pdf

& Browse and read: "Favela's Life: Rio's City Within a City"
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-27635554>

*Exam Essay question will be distributed on Thursday

Week of October 12

In-class Midterm essay.

Fischer et al: *Cities From Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America*

Week of October 19

Film: Urbanize

Fischer et al: *Cities From Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America*

Week of November 26

Podcast of Radical Cities <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhErCRQxsuA>

Radical Cities in Latin America, In Search for a New Architecture, Introduction and Chapters 1-5

Response Paper #2 Due

Week of November 2

Margaret Crawford, "From the Feel Good City to the Just City" (in NYU Classes)

Week of November 9 Latin American Cities in Film

Reading and Films to be announced

November 16 The Neoliberal City and the New Retail Urbanism

Davila, *El Mall, Spatial and Class Politics of Shopping Malls in Latin America*, Introduction, Available Online.

Film: The Human Scale

Response Paper # 3 due

Week of November 23

Film: TBA

Thanksgiving Recess

Week of November 30: Transnational Processes: The Latinization of US Cities

Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. Big City* – Introduction

Barrio Dreams, Puerto Ricans, Latinos and the Neoliberal City

Week of Dec 7 Gentrification

Visit by Andrew Padilla Filmmaker and anti-gentrification activist

Film: East Harlem Tours

Response Paper #4 due

Week of December 14th

Wrap up and final Exam

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