

Historical Studies: Women in the City
SOCSCI 3520 005
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Spring 2014 | Mondays, 1-4 | Spertus 722

Instructor and Course Website

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Course Description

This course provides a social and cultural analysis of women in the U.S., from the early nineteenth century through the post-WWII “urban crisis” and women’s liberation movements, to the present day. We will examine how urban life for men and women diverged and how it met, asking how gender has been negotiated in the confined space of the city. In doing so, the course reveals how social, legal, cultural, religious, sexual, and political dimensions of gendered identities are constructed through the design, organization, control, and contestation of concrete spaces.

Focusing primarily on Chicago, we will study the way urban spaces provided sites and sources of new kinds of personal interaction, popular entertainment, social conflict, and political expression, in order to learn how women (and men) have engaged with the city around them, and to ask how the city has shaped understandings of gender roles. We will study these ideas through readings in both primary and secondary sources; in visits to libraries and historic sites; in in-class film screenings and class discussions; and in a series of short writing assignments. The chief goals of the course are to help class members think historically and spatially; and to convey their thinking in clear, direct, writing.

Required Texts

Students are required to purchase the following course texts, which we will read in full:

- Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (1900) – any edition will do. The first edition can also be downloaded from Internet Archive in a variety of formats (see course website for link)
- Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Duke University Press, 2007)
- Valerie Taylor, *The Girls in 3B* (Beacon Books, 1959; reissued by the Feminist Press, 2003)

All of the books are easily acquired from local bookstores, on-line sellers, or local libraries; they will also be on reserve at Flaxman Library. All other readings are available online via canvas and the course website, as noted on the schedule of readings.

Course Requirements and Grading

1) Attendance and Participation

Our class will be conducted as a seminar so active and informed participation is essential to its success. Class members are required to read the assigned material *before* the relevant class, to think critically about the reading, and to arrive at class with readings in hand, ready to talk with each other.

At the opening of every class meeting, students will take 10 minutes to complete a written response to the reading. The responses are designed to spur discussion and to help you prepare for the final exam. The responses cannot be made up under any circumstances so absences (or arriving more than 10 minutes late to class) will result in a failing grade for that day's response. Students who fail more than three responses will fail the class.

Attendance Policy from the SAIC Bulletin: *Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and on time. Any necessary absences should be explained to the instructor. Students who are ill should contact their faculty member or leave a message for the instructor in the department office the day they are absent. For an extended absence due to illness, contact Health Services. Notification is then sent to all instructors informing them of the student's absence. For other extenuating circumstances contact the Academic Advising office. Also note that if a student registers late or a class (during add/drop) the instructor counts the missed classes as absences and the student is responsible for assignments given during those missed days.*

2) Primary Source Analysis Papers

Students will complete a series of short writing assignments related to the course readings and the larger themes of the course. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade for the course. We will discuss the requirements for each assignment further in class. Students should submit all the assignments electronically as word documents (.doc/.docx) in 12 point font, double spaced, to mmercado1@saic.edu, except where noted.

Analysis # 1 | Due Week 4 | *Mental Maps* (2-3pgs text + map)

Maps are selective, purposeful representations of a place; they are essential to urban planning. Maps quickly communicate multiple levels of detail and scale and can address diverse factors such culture, behavior, and physical environment. We carry individualized maps in our heads, based around the particular landmarks that are important to our conceptualization of place. These impressions of place are referred to as 'mental maps' by geographers and social scientists. They may be influenced to some extent by our gender.

For the first assignment, *you* create the primary source to analyze, drawing a mental map of your hometown or current living location. Make sure to indicate where you live, along with many other relevant landmarks for you. Label the general location of the map clearly. Don't worry if the map does not coincide with a 'real' cartographic map; do not consult with a cartographic map in producing your mental map, because your individualized version of place will provide more interesting to analyze. After completing your map, you will analyze the document in a short paper.

Analysis # 2 | Due Week 7 | *Twenty Years at Hull House* (3-5pgs)

In 1911, the reformer Jane Addams published her autobiography, *Twenty-Years at Hull-House*, illustrated by Norah Hamilton. Located on Chicago's Near West Side, home to the city's most recent immigrants, Hull-House provided social services such as childcare and job placement. Choose one image from the text, and analyze it, placing Addams' work in conversation with your choice of theoretical works from the first weeks of the course.

Analysis # 3 | Due Weeks 11, 15 | *Final Paper: Chicago Women's History* (4-5pgs)

For the final assignment, you will research the history of a particular Chicago location (a street, building, park, neighborhood, etc.) you deem important to the histories of women, gender, and/or sexuality we have studied during the semester. A list of suggested research sites will be determined in class, and students will be expected to choose a site by week 11, by submitting a one paragraph paper proposal. In addition to the written paper, each student will be required to make an oral presentation to the class during our final meeting.

3) Final Exam

Students are required to receive a grade of 75% or higher on the final exam, to be held during the last class meeting on Monday, May 5. The exam will ask students to respond to two short essay questions on the course themes, as reflected in the course readings. Students may refer to their class/reading notes during the exam.

Important Dates/Course Deadlines

Wednesday, February 5:	<i>Add/Drop deadline</i>
Monday, February 17	Mapping assignment due (email and <u>bring to class</u>)
Friday, March 14	<i>Twenty Years at Hull-House</i> assignment due <i>via email</i> (3-5pgs)
Friday, April 11	Final paper topic due <i>via email</i> (1 paragraph)
Monday, May 5:	Final Paper due <u>in class</u> (3-5pgs) Final Paper presentation <u>in class</u> (5 minutes) Final exam <u>in class</u>
Monday, May 12:	<i>Instructor submits final grades for course</i>

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To summarize, in order to earn credit for the course you must: 1) receive no more than three grades of "no credit" on the weekly written responses; 2) submit three acceptable primary source analysis papers, on time; 3) receive a grade of 75% or higher on the final exam.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any written or presented work guarantees failure in the course.

For information about avoiding plagiarism please see *Plagiarism: How to Recognize It and Avoid It*: www.saic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism_packet.pdf.

Library staff have also prepared a two-page synopsis of the committee's handbook as *Avoid Plagiarism: Quick Guide*: <http://www.saic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism.pdf>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Any student in need of academic adjustments or accommodations because of a disability should first contact SAIC's Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC).

The Disability and Learning Resource Center can be reached by phone at 312.499.4278 or by sending an email to dlrc@saic.edu. DLRC will review the student's disability documentation and will work with the student to determine reasonable accommodations. DLRC will then provide the student with a letter outlining approved accommodations. This letter must be presented to the instructor before any accommodations will be implemented. Students should contact DLRC as early in the semester as possible.

Course Etiquette:

- Be on time for class, prepared to discuss our readings. This means bringing digital and/or print copies of our readings to the classroom so that you can reference them in our discussion.
- Take notes: when you read, and in class. Your notes will be important to your writing assignments and to completing the final exam.
- Cell phones must on silent, and texting during class is ABSOLUTELY unacceptable.
- If using a laptop, restrict your activities to referencing our readings and note taking. I reserve the right to ban laptops if usage during class becomes a distraction.
- Late assignments will be accepted on a case-by-case basis, only if you contact me at least 24 hours before the due date or with a documented emergency.

Course Schedule

January 27 | Week 1:

Introductions

Tara Isabella Burton, "Dangers of Traveling While Female," Salon (August 27, 2013).

February 3 | Week 2:

Bodies, Cities, Gender

Elizabeth Grosz, "Bodies-Cities," in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 241-53. *Canvas*.

Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91.5 (December 1986): 1053-1075. *Canvas*.

Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (University of Illinois Press, 1987), xi-xiv and 3-37 (Introduction and Chapters 1-2). *Canvas*.

In-class Film Screening Part 1: "Chicago, City of the Century" (2003)

February 10 | Week 3:

Into the Streets: Finding Chicago's City of Women

Michel de Certeau, trans. Steven Rendall, "Walking in the City" and "Spacial Stories," *The Practices of Everyday Life* (University of California Press, 1984), 91-130. *Canvas*

Suellen Hoy, "Caring for Chicago's Women and Girls: The Sisters of the Good Shepherd, 1859-1911," *Journal of Urban History* 23.3 (March 1997): 260-94. *Canvas*.

Karen Sawislak, "Relief, Aid, and Order: Class, Gender, and the Definition of Community in the Aftermath of Chicago's Great Fire," *Journal of Urban History* 20.1 (November 1993): 3-18. *Canvas*.

In-class Film Screening, Part 2: "Chicago: City of the Century" (2003)

February 17 | Week 4:

Sex and Work

****Mapping assignment due in class**

John D'Emilio "Capitalism and Gay Identity," (1983) in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (Psychology Press, 1993), 467-476. *Canvas*.

Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sexual Geography and Gender Economy: The Furnished Room Districts of Chicago, 1890-1930," *Gender & History* 2.3 (Autumn 1990): 274-296. *Canvas*.

February 24 | Week 5:

Chicago 1893 (& class visit to Ryerson & Burnham Libraries)

Rachel E. Bohlmann, "Our 'House Beautiful': The Woman's Temple and the WCTU Effort to Establish Place and Identity in Downtown Chicago, 1887-1898," *Journal of Women's History* 11.2 (1999): 110-134. *Canvas*.

Judy Sund, "Columbus and Columbia in Chicago, 1893: Man of Genius Meets Generic Woman," *Art Bulletin* 75.3 (September 1993): 443-466. *Canvas*.

[skim] *World's Columbian Exposition Official Catalogue Part XIV. Woman's Building* (Chicago: W.B. Conkey Co., 1893), via Internet Archive. *Website link*.

[start *Sister Carrie!*]

March 3 | Week 6:

The Pleasures and Dangers of the City (& class visit to the Walnut Room)

Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (1900).

March 10 | Week 7:
Reforming the City

Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House: With Autobiographical Notes* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1911) via Internet Archive, selections. *Website link*.

Maureen A. Flanagan, "The City Profitable, the City Liveable: Environmental Policy, Gender, and Power in Chicago in the 1910s," *Journal of Urban History* 22.2 (January 1996): 163-190. *Canvas*.

****Friday, March 14: Twenty Years at Hull-House analysis due**

March 17 | Week 8:
At Home in the City (& class visit to Robie House w/\$12.00 entrance fee)

Lizabeth Clemens, "Encountering Mass Culture" in *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 99-158. *Canvas*.

Dolores Hayden, "What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like?" in *Women and the American City*, ed. Catharine R. Stimpson et.al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 167-184. *Canvas*.

March 24 | Week 9:
Black Metropolis, Urban Renewal

St. Clair Drake, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (1945; University of Chicago Press edition, 1993), selected maps. *Canvas*.

Hazel Carby, "Policing the Black Woman's Body in an Urban Context," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (Summer 1992): 738-55. *Canvas*.

Sylvia Hood Washington, "Mrs. Block Beautiful: African American Women and the Birth of the Urban Conservation Movement, Chicago, Illinois, 1917-1954," *Environmental Justice* 1.1 (2008): 13-23. *Canvas*.

Sarah Potter, "Family Ideals: The Diverse Meanings of Residential Space in Chicago during the Baby Boom," *Journal of Urban History* 39.1 (January 2013): 59-78. *Canvas*.

In-class Film Screening: "Raisin in the Sun" (1961)

March 31 | Week 10:
The Girls in 3B (& Class Visit to Flaxman Library Special Collections)

Valerie Taylor, *The Girls in 3B* (Beacon Books, 1959; reissued by the Feminist Press, 2003)

April 7 | Week 11:

The Death and Life of a Chicago Edifice

“The Mecca: Chicago’s Showiest Apartment Has Given Up All but the Ghost,” *Life Magazine* (November 19, 1951). *Website link*.

Gwendolyn Brooks, *In the Mecca: Poems* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968). *Canvas*.

Daniel Bluestone, “Chicago Mecca Flat Blues,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57.4 (December 1998): 382-403. *Canvas*.

**** Friday, April 11: final paper topic due**

April 14 | Week 12:

Women’s Liberation and Feminist Responses

Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 1-101, 145-173, 252-267.

In-class Film Screening: “The Story of JANE” (2001)

April 21 | Week 13:

Cities for Some Bodies

Leonard Ramirez, ed., *Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), selections. *Canvas*.

David Serlin, “Pissing Without Pity: Disability, Gender, and the Public Toilet,” in *Toilet: Public Restrooms and the Politics of Sharing*, eds. Harvey Molotch and Laura Noren (New York: NYU Press, 2010), 216-241. *Canvas*.

Daphne Spain, “What Happened to Gender Relations on the Way from Chicago to Los Angeles?,” *City & Community* 1.2 (June 2002): 155-169. *Canvas*.

April 28 | Week 14:

NO CLASS – ART INSTITUTE CRITIQUE WEEK

May 5 | Week 15:

A Women’s History Map of Chicago – Final Presentations and Final Exam

Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, “Women’s History Bus Tour: Near West Side and Pilsen” (June 2004) - read Virtual Tour and PDF Tour Guide pages. *Website link*.