

JUSTICE IN THE CITY

Spring 2021

Mondays/Wednesdays, 6:00-7:30pm, January 11 to April 28, 2021

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Site Coordinators: Eric Wilson (until February 24) & Jacqueline Andrews (March 3 to April 28, 2021)

Description

This course asks us to think about Chicago's spaces and places, who shaped them, who will shape them in the future, and how concepts of power, rights, and justice determine our interactions with the city. Together we will explore Chicago's history as a metropolis formed on occupied, colonized land and fueled by industrial labor, infrastructural and architectural innovation, trade, and political wrangling. At the same time, we will recover the ways these stories of power, profit, and growth distract from Chicago's legacy as one of the most racially segregated, overpoliced, and unequal cities in the United States. Our course will examine the deep social problems and miseries produced by such inequalities. These conditions have also produced social movements and figures from a wide array of backgrounds dedicated towards social justice. By the end of the semester, you will have gained greater facility in understanding how the city and its spaces function, as well as analytic and active tools to participate in making it more just.

Our goals for this course are to:

- ❖ Better understand the agents that shape the urban spaces in which we live, whether they be urban planners, government officials, the criminal justice system, realtors, bankers, or community organizers.
- ❖ Consider the ways in which the history of space and place in Chicago organize, limit, and influence our choices, experiences, and opportunities in Chicago.
- ❖ Gain analytical and practical tools to inform governance, claim urban space, and resist inequitable urban systems.

Required Texts

Readings will be distributed before each class, as needed. However, they are downloadable in PDF form or via web links from the course website as well.

Your Responsibilities

- 1) **Class Participation:** Attendance, thoughtful reading, and active participation in class discussions are essential components of this class. Please come to class prepared to contribute fully to discussions. You may find it especially helpful to take notes as you read and come to class with a few points and/or questions you would like to address.
- 2) **Field Notes (2x):** Field notes are an opportunity to take what you are reading in class into your daily life. Since this is a course grounded in space and place, it will require you to explore the city around you. If you are not comfortable leaving your home, there are alternative ways of “exploring” that we will share. The field notes assignments will ask you to apply something you learned in our readings to your own experience with Chicago.. Each assignment will be 2-3 pages in length. We will give you a detailed format for these notes early in the semester.
- 3) **Interview:** For this assignment, you will choose a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, or someone else you know to learn about how they experience space and place in Chicago. The idea is to be able to sit down with this person for 45 minutes to an hour (on Zoom, on the phone, or via some other remote medium unless you live with this person) for an interview. If you do not have someone in mind, ask us and we will provide! More details on this assignment, as well as proposed interview questions are to come. Note that it is not necessary to record the interview, nor to identify the real name of the person you interviewed, but you will need to take detailed notes to complete the final assignment described below.
- 4) **Envisioning Justice Rapid Response Presentation (2-3 students per team):** Your final presentation will contribute to Illinois Humanities’ Envisioning Justice Rapid Response event on YouTube, which is scheduled for late-April. This is an exciting opportunity to put together your own research (field notes, interviews, and assigned readings) in an original, compelling way that considers the question: What is Justice in the City of Chicago through the lens of space and place? We will provide details on this assignment as we move closer to the middle of the semester, but be assured that there are many ways to complete

this assignment in creative and more analytical ways. And we will guide you along the way!

Community Agreement

Honor the time, energy, opinions and space of your classmates. We all may not agree on what our texts mean or how they apply to our lives. This is a good thing for a couple of reasons! First, it helps us learn to really listen deeply to one another and consider new perspectives. Second, it helps us understand ourselves and our values more clearly. So, please embrace the opportunity to learn from your classmates by honoring their time, energy, opinions, and space in the classroom (and outside of class, too, for that matter!)

A Note on Syllabus Changes

Some of the readings each week can be intense or difficult, and require further discussion. If that is the case, I may make changes to the syllabus as the semester progresses to reflect the needs of the class as a whole. However, I will notify you well in advance of any changes.

Schedule:

Week One: Before Settlement

Settler Colonial City Project, "Mapping Chicagou/Chicago: A Living Atlas" (2019)

Week Two: Origins of Private Property

John Locke, "Chapter 5: Property" from *Second Treatise of Government* (1689)

Week Three: Mapping the "Slum"

"Nationality Maps", "Wage Maps", and Agnes Sinclair Holbrook, "Map Notes and Comments", *Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895)

Week Four: Building the City

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*, Chapter VII (1906)

*****Field Notes Assignment #1 DUE*****

Week Five: Defining the Neighborhood

Ernest W. Burgess, "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project" from *The City* by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess (1925)

Week Six: Place

Robert Sampson, "Chapter 1: Placed" from *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect* (2012)

Week Seven: Space and Race

George Lipsitz, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape" (2007)

Week Eight: Whose Neighborhood? Part I

Beryl Satter, "Chapter 2: The Noose Around Black Chicago" from *Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America* (2009)

Week Nine: Whose Neighborhood? Part II

(Visit from Envisioning Justice team on Monday, March 8)

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Act III (1959)

*****Field Notes #2 Assignment DUE*****

Week Ten: Urban Ecology and Public Health

Eric Klinenberg, "Race, Place, and Vulnerability: Urban Neighborhoods & The Ecology of Support" from *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago* (2002)

Week Eleven: Gentrification

Matthew Schuerman, "Chapter 4: The Gold Coast and the Slum, Revisited: Chicago, 1966-1991" from *Newcomers: Gentrification and its Discontents* (2018)

Selections for Donna Stonecipher, *Model City* (2015)

Week Twelve: Urban Space, Health, and Resistance

David A. Ansell, "Chapter 3: Location, Location, Location" and "Chapter 12: Community Activism Against Structural Violence" from *The Death Gap: How Inequality Kills* (2017)

*****Interview DUE*****

Week Thirteen: Claiming a Right to the City

David Harvey, "The Right to the City", *New Left Review* 53, September/October (2008)

Week Fourteen: Government By The People

Choose One to Explore:

- Chicago City-Owned Land Inventory: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/city-owned_land_inventory.html
- Million Dollar Blocks: <https://chicagosmilliondollarblocks.com/>
- We Will Chicago, Citywide Planning Portal: <https://wewillchicago.com/>
- People's Budget Chicago: <https://peoplesbudgetchicago.com/>
- Settling for Misconduct: <http://projects.chicagoreporter.com/settlements/search/cases>
- Citizen Police Data Project: <https://invisible.institute/police-data>

Week Fifteen: Envisioning Justice Rapid Response!

We will use this week to work on polishing our submissions to the Rapid Response series.

Please mark your calendar for the evening of **[May 5 for the actual Rapid Response!](#)**