

**University of Toronto
Department of Political Science
Capitalism and the City
First-Year Seminar (SII 199F)**

Professor: Michael W. Donnelly

Class time: Wednesday, 10-12

Class location: LA 214

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Office hours: Wednesday, 1-4 pm or by appointment

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Why Cities? The year 2008 marked the first time in history that a majority of the world's people lives in Cities — a percentage projected to rise to 75 percent or more by 2050. Seventy percent of Global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is currently generated in urban areas. Thirty seven percent of the world's 100 largest economies are Cities. Cities produce 75 to 80 percent of the world's greenhouse emissions. A third of global urban population lives in slums.

As Samuel Johnson the English author once remarked, "A great city is, to be sure, the school for studying life." The future sustainability of the planet depends significantly on what will happen in Cities and their metropolitan areas. Where you choose to live will greatly affect your life choices.

Cities are windows into nations, a reflection of the dreams and possibilities, a place of liberty where individuals can pursue their individual dreams and fortunes. Big Cities often claim a disproportionate share of their nation's economic, political, communication and cultural resources. They are also places of high costs of living, urban decay, traffic congestion, and economic polarization.

In the study of Cities, a guiding framework often begins by focusing on urban forms: transportation systems, buildings, industrial, commercial and residential neighborhoods, public spaces. A City is a forest of built artifacts. The concrete forms of urban life have a profound impact on the wealth of a City, on the environment, on people growing up, on working, and growing old. Subway breakdowns, power failures, floods, deteriorating roads and bridges burden daily life in the City.

Still, individuals are not helplessly enclosed in the vice grip of unchanging urban forms. Cities are an ongoing social invention. The structure of the City is continuously subject to modification and sometimes radical change. Some Cities are resilient; others decay. New ones continue to appear.

Where to start? A partial impetus of this course is to adopt the assertion of an illustrious dramatist: "What is the city but the people?" (Shakespeare, Coriolanus III). People matter. When we examine urban life, we need to scrutinize not only built forms but also social processes that produce the City landscape.

As a general entry point of the seminar we will consider how Capitalism does or does not shape "ways of life" in the City. If the City is considered to have its roots in markets then it is reasonable to assume

that it will reflect in differing ways the character of Capitalism. The twists and turns, the booms and busts of Capitalism impact not only the “economy” of Cities but government and society as well. The reverse also obtains. The vagaries and sometimes sheer brutality of the Capitalist marketplace is constrained by a large public sphere and the pursuit of a wide variety of individual and group aspirations.

What will we discover? The future of any large City is fluid, its “ways of life” within and beyond the marketplace always in transition, a future ever clouded with uncertainty. To be sure there is unprecedented interconnected complexity in urban life, contradictions of enormous significance. Much of this can be captured by understanding capitalist markets, social identity and interactions, and power relations.

Class Format – The course is a **seminar**. A seminar is not one-way instruction. There will be no formal lectures by the professor. We share the mission of making this a successful endeavor. Starting in week three, students will rotate responsibility for leading discussion. A team of two students (depending on final enrollment) will begin the class with a brief presentation (about 10 minutes) aimed at stimulating discussion: “what is important in the today’s readings.” The presenters can decide on how best to do this. A separate handout entitled “Terrain of Discussions” should help us stay focused on our shared class agenda.

Required Readings – There is no single text book, no books or class readers to be purchased for this class. All required readings have been posted on **Blackboard**. At first glance the amount of reading might seem daunting. **It is not.** I have tried to limit the total readings to 50 pages or so a week. Many of the single readings are extremely brief, drawn from a variety of sources both scholarly and popular. Students are expected to do the readings beforehand and prepared to discuss them in class. Please bring to class your notes (and copies of the assignments if you like) on the week’s reading assignments.

Project – There is **no final exam** in this course. Instead, a feature of the seminar is a **project** which will allow you to briefly learn about how independent research is done. There are two project choices directly related to the course readings. They are: (a) take a walk around the neighborhood to suggest with the course readings in mind the appropriate future of Toronto’s icon store: **Honest Ed’s**; (b) craft a research proposal to investigate to what extent a Canadian City embodies exemplary characteristics associated with an **Ideal City** suited to the aspirations of the so-called “Generation Y” (also known as “Millennial Generation;” born between 1982-2001). A separate handout provides further details.

Weekly Meetings

Week One: Introduction

- Getting acquainted
- The rationale for 199 courses
- The Human Scale: <http://thehumanscale.dk/>
- Cities and Us
- The “is” and the “ought:” “interplay” between the empirical and the normative

- Our Interdisciplinary Focus: **Big Cities** as Built Environments and as Social Settings
- A Major Theme: Capitalism and “Ways of Life”
- Weekly Topics
- Class Format, Requirements and Grading Scheme
- A Project
- The rules and practices at the University of Toronto

Week Two: **Finding our Place:** the form, boundaries and structure of **Big Cities**, edged by sprawling **Suburbs**, embedded in even larger **Regions. City-Regions** are becoming central to modern life.

Reading Assignments

- Entries on three concepts: “Cities,” “Suburbs” and “Regions, Metropolitan” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2nd edition. A comprehensive on-line handbook describing the field of Urban Studies is *Encyclopedia of Urban Studies*.
- Do a quick read of “Greater Toronto Area” and “Golden Horseshoe” on *Wikipedia*. Check out on the web a satellite image of agglomeration that is southern Ontario.
- “Introduction” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader* (Routledge, 5th edition, 2011): 15-19; a tiny bit of history.
- Jan Gehl, “The human dimension” in Gehl, *Cities for People*, (Island Press): ch. one, 3-9
- Table 1.1 “Urban Properties and Their Effect on the Contemporary City,” Trudi Bunting, et al., *Canadian Cities in Transition*, (Oxford University Press, 2010, 4th edition): 15-16
- Brian Ladd, “Cities on Wheels: Cars and Public Space,” in Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, eds., *The New Blackwell Companion to the City* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011): 265-274
- Robert Fishman, “Introduction” in Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century* (The MIT Press, 1994):3-20

Week Three: **Urbanization, Industrialization and City Life:** Urbanization as a hallmark of the 21st century.

Reading Assignments

- Harry Hiller, “Introduction: Urbanization and the City,” in Hiller, *Urban Canada* (Oxford University Press, 2010, 2nd edition) xii – xiv
- Mike Davis, “The Urban Climacteric” in Davis, *Planet of Slums* (Verso Press, 2006): ch. one, 1-19
- Edward Glaeser, “What’s Good About Slums” in Glaeser, *Triumph of the City* (The Penguin Press, 2011) 69-91
- Douglas Rae, “Creative Destruction” in *City: Urbanism and its End* (Yale University Press, 2003): 7 - 16 (this is an e-book)
- Richard Florida, “Cities and the Creative Class,” *City and Community* 2:1 (March 2003)3-19

- David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Volume 27-4 (December 2003): 939-41

Week Four: **Capitalism in the City:** Is inequality inevitable? Is everything for sale?

Reading Assignments

- James Fulcher, "What then is capitalism" in Fulcher, *Capitalism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2004): 13-18
- Michael J. Sandel, "Introduction: Markets and Morals," in Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy*, (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2012): 3-16
- Tara Vinodrai, "The Dynamics of Economic Change in Canadian Cities: Innovation, Culture, and the Emergence of a Knowledge-Based Economy," in Trudi Bunting, et. al., *Canadian Cities in Transition* (Oxford University Press, fourth edition, 2010): 87-91
- Reread Douglas Rae, "Creative Destruction"
- Peter V. Hall, "The Global Imperative," in Trudi Bunting, et. al., *Canadian Cities in Transition* (Oxford University Press, fourth edition, 2010): 56-58
- Jerry Z. Muller, "Capitalism and Inequality" in Foreign Affairs (March-April 2013): 30-51

Week Five: World's within Big Cities: **Neighborhoods**

Reading Assignments

- Jane Jacobs, "The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety" in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (Routledge, 2011): 105-109
- Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life" Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, 5th edition (Routledge, 2011): 96-104
- Katherine J. Curtis White and Avery M. Guest (2003). "Community Lost or Transformed? Urbanization and Social Ties," *City and Community*. 2(3):239-259.
- "how to look at a single street" See: <http://mixedrealitycity.tumblr.com/syllabus>
- Robert J. Sampson, "Placed," and "Ideology of Community Lament" in Sampson, *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect* (The University of Chicago Press) pp. 3-5 and 44-46
- David Hulchanski, "The Three Cities Within Toronto" on-line: <http://3cities.neighbourhoodchange.ca/>

Week Six: **Negotiating Crowded Life:** anonymity, social discomfort and the commercialization of life in the Big City

Reading Assignments

- Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life;" in Sharon M. Meagher, ed., *Philosophy and the City* (State University of New York Press, 2008): 96-101

- Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (Simon Schuster, 2000):15-28; 287-295.
- Viviana A. Zelizer, “Do Markets Poison Intimacy?” in *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy*, pp. 171-180 (this is an e-book)
- Edward Glaeser, Jed Kolko and Albert Satz, “Consumers and Cities,” *Research in Urban Policy* 9, 177-183

Week Seven: **Identity and Diversity** in the ever-changing Big City like Toronto

Reading Assignments

- Susan Fainstein, “Cities and Diversity: Should we want it? Can we Plan for it? *Urban Affairs Review*, 41 (1) 3-19
- Geraldine Pratt. “Domestic Workers, Gentrification and Diversity in Vancouver” in Sharon M. Meagher, ed., *Philosophy and the City* (State University of New York Press, 2008): 265-269
- Jeffrey Reitz, “Pro-Immigration Canada: Social and Economic Roots of Popular Views,” IRPP Study: http://www.irpp.org/pubs/irppstudy/irpp_study_no20.pdf
- For specifics on Toronto let’s look at:
 - o City of Toronto, “*Toronto Racial Diversity*” Do a quick read for basic information. http://www.toronto.ca/toronto_facts/diversity.htm
 - o City of Toronto, “*Creative City: Planning Framework*;” This is a long report but gives you the opportunity to read a formal government document on the idea of Toronto as a creative City. Scan and read as appropriate and come to class with your views. <http://www.toronto.ca/culture/pdf/creative-city-planning-framework-feb08.pdf>

Week Eight: **Work and Class**

Reading Assignments

- Class Handout: “Seven Distinct Classes” in the 21st century “
- Randy Hodson, “The Evolution of Work” in Randy Hodson and Teresa Sullivan, *The Social Organization of Work*, fourth edition (Thomson, 2008): 3-8
- “Getting Perspective” (page 108) and Daniyal Zuberi, “Uban Inequality and Urban Social Movements” in Harry H. Hiller, *Urban Canada*, Second edition (Oxford University Press, 2010): 109-114.
- Jacob S. Hacker, “The New Economic Insecurity” in Hacker, *The Great Risk Shift* (Oxford University Press, 2006); ch.1, 11-34

Week Nine: **Urban Failings:** inequality and poverty

Reading Assignments

- “poverty, housing and homelessness in Toronto” <http://www.toronto.ca/affordablehousing/pdf/poverty-factsheet.pdf>

- Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, “Poverty or inequality,” and “How inequality gets under the skin,” in Wilkinson and Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* (Penguin, 2009):15-45
- Ian Shapiro. “Why the poor don’t soak the rich” in *Daedalus* (Winter 2002): 118-128

Week Ten: **Power and Citizenship** in the City

Reading Assignments

- Richard Stren, et. al., “The Governance of Toronto: Challenges of Size and Complexity” <http://www.citiescentre.utoronto.ca/Assets/Cities+Centre+2013+Digital+Assets/Cities+Centre/Cities+Centre+Digital+Assets/pdfs/publications/Governance+of+Toronto+updated+July+2013.pdf>
- Frank Cunningham, “The virtues of urban citizenship” in *City, Culture and Society* 2 (2011): 35-44
- To be assigned: A case study of power in the City: real estate industry

Week Eleven: **City/Urban Planning:** establishing a collective vision for the City.

Reading Assignments

- Frank Cunningham, “Cities: A Philosophic Inquiry” in Research Bulletin #39, Centre for Urban and Community Studies (September 2007).
- Timothy Beatley, “Planning for Sustainability in European Cities: A Review of Practice in Leading Cities” in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader* (Routledge, 5th edition 2011): 448-457
- Lisa Bornstein, “Mega-projects, city-building and community benefits” in *City, Culture and Society* 1(2010): 199-206
- City of Toronto - Planning - <http://www.toronto.ca/planning>
- City of Toronto, *Toronto Waterfront Design Initiative: Urban Design Report* http://www.toronto.ca/waterfront/pdf/twf_booklet.pdf

Week Twelve: Summing Up: **Globalization** and **Global Cities**

Reading Assignments

- Saskia Sassen, “Place and Production in the Global Economy” in Sassen, *Cities in a World Economy*, 4th edition (Sage Publications: 2012): 1-14
- Check out UN Habitat, State of the World’s Cities, a series of biennial reports

Grading

Class Participation

- Weekly Participation* 20%
- Joint Class Presentation on Readings 10%

Written Work

- Analytical Essay on assigned readings (3-4 pages) 30%
- “Analytical Outline” of Project (2-3 pages) 10%

Research Project

- Final Research Project (8-10 pages) 30%

*Assigned by the following criteria: weekly attendance; evidence of having read the assigned material; ability to explain, analyze and criticize the materials; thoughtfulness in relating readings to the major themes of the course, keeping us all alert and thinking. Consult *Faculty of Arts and Science Calendar* for Faculty-wide grading regulations.

Key dates and deadlines:

- Analytical Essay Due: October 16th at class meeting
- Outline on Project Due: November 6th at class meeting
- Final Project Due: November 27th at class meeting

Blackboard is a technological toolkit adopted by the U of T to support teaching. Essential course documents (e.g. the course syllabus and reading assignments) are posted to the course Blackboard site. I may sometimes post short articles or documents that are timely and that shed light on a week's readings. You should get in the habit of referring to the course site on Blackboard on a regular basis as it is widely used at the University. You are required to use your @utoronto.ca account.

Staying in Touch - I keep office hours on Wednesdays. Otherwise, the best way to get in touch is by e-mail which I check fairly regularly and will respond as quickly as possible. I welcome meetings at other times but I may not be in my office except at regularly scheduled office hours, so check in advance. Again, please use your @utoronto.ca account.

E-mail and Assignment Delivery Policy: Do not email your assignments. I do not open emails whose sender is not clearly identified. No assignments will be accepted via e-mail, fax, or under my office door. Students should keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their essays before submitting for grading.

Grading and Late Penalties – As indicated above, written assignments are to be submitted to me at our class meeting on the day due. A penalty will be imposed of 2% per day (of the grade for that assignment

– out of 100%). Extensions will only be granted with “good reason,” (doctor’s note, hospital records, etc.).

Electronic Devices: Digital gadgets are not to be used during class. Please turn off (not silent, or vibrate) Cell Phones, Smart Phones, etc. We will be in a cocoon of intellectual engagement for slightly less than two hours, isolated from the frantic pace of life that fills your university days. If I see you texting away I may ask you to answer a question or explain a reading. Modern technology is a mixed blessing. We can discuss use of computers in the classroom at our first class.

On Academic Integrity:.. The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Additional information is available at <http://utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>. Please consult as well the Department of Political Science website: www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources.

To remind you of these expectations, and help you avoid accidental offences, I will ask you to include a signed “**Academic Integrity Checklist**” on the final project assignment. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Turnitin.com is a tool widely used on North American Universities to assist in detecting textual similarities between compared works. I will use it in this course.

“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site”.

On Accommodation: The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs.

For more **information on services** and resources available to instructors and students, please contact Tanya Lewis, Director, Academic Skills and Accessibility Services at 416-978-6786; tanya.lewis@utoronto.ca.