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Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30pm-3:30pm
Sidney Smith Hall, Room 3060

POL 198: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE CITY

Wednesday 10:00am-12:00pm

Course Description

Cities highlight the best and worst aspects of modern life and they reveal the starkest contradictions of our time. Cities, for example, produce the majority of the world's wealth and are engines of the global economy yet they also give rise to extreme forms of poverty and inequality. They are hubs of creativity, innovation, and ingenuity as well as social disorder, dysfunction, and environmental degradation. Cities foster transnational connections, diverse communities, and rich public lives but they also breed alienation, exclusions, and social antagonisms. They promise liberty, progress, and prosperity for all at the same time that they institutionalize systems of control, exploitation and violence. How do we make sense of this complex and contradictory picture? Who benefits and who loses from different modes of urban development? How can we build cities that promote 'the good life' for all residents equally?

The course examines the dynamics of social justice and the city. The course first introduces a variety of ways (e.g. liberal, Marxist, feminist) that we can think about social justice. With these various dialogues on social justice sketched out, the course turns its attention to the urban context. It asks what is distinctive about social justice in an urban context and how we might view justice and injustice as matters of spatial politics. In the final section of the course, several timely urban themes are examined. Here we will apply our understandings of social justice to issues of housing, mobility, public space, and decision making. Thus, the course considers the city as a crucial setting for social theorizing as well as a key site of social change.

Overall the class claims that the various forms of urban injustice that surround us are not natural phenomena but political creations – and therefore always resistible through emancipatory movements. In this way, we will consider the extent to which various conceptions of social justice can help us to understand the forces that shape urban environments, provide us with critical tools to address urban problems, and enable us to build alternative, more socially just communities.

Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to various notions of social justice so that they can better understand diverse urban issues and use this knowledge to reflect on their own lives. The objectives for student learning in this course can be roughly grouped into two main categories: knowledge and skills. At the end of the year, you should:

- Be able to define, describe, and debate a number of key theories of social justice
- Recognize the highly uneven and differentiated character of urbanization and how various hierarchical structures affect contemporary urban politics
- Understand how justice and injustice are operate through institutions of urban development and dynamics of urban life

- Examine various urban issues (including access to housing, mobility, public space, and decision making) from a social justice perspective
- Have a better understanding of your own embeddedness within urban relations and your capacities for individual and collective action
- Have an improved ability to critically read texts and analyze complex arguments about the social world
- Be better able to communicate ideas both verbally and in writing

Requirements

Participation

Students are expected to attend every session—and arrive on time—unless a serious illness or emergency arises. Our classroom will be a safe academic environment where ideas are devised, debated, and deconstructed. Feel free to speak your mind on any and all of the issues that will arise during the course. A university is an important place to debate difficult issues—and in doing so, to challenge others, to appreciate unfamiliar viewpoints, and to reflect upon and deepen one’s own convictions. All students are encouraged to think out loud and to exchange ideas openly.

As a seminar, this course will be directed **by and for students**. My role as the instructor is to provide you with a shared conceptual framework for discussion and to facilitate your learning. My role is not to deliver factual material to passive learners. It is essential that you take your role as active participant seriously. The success of the seminar is dependent on the group's ability to work together and, through intelligent discussion, develop an understanding of the material that you would not have come to on your own. A seminar is an ongoing and open conversation that unfolds through our shared collective engagements. Each member of the class therefore carries the burden of responsibility for the quality of the discussion. Good discussions tend to occur when participants study texts closely in advance, listen actively, share their ideas and questions in response to the ideas and questions of others, and are generous and respectful to their peers and interlocutors.

NB: Weekly class attendance is necessary, but not sufficient for a top class participation grade. Your participation will be evaluated according to the following guidelines:

Grade	Description of Contribution
A	Actively supports, engages, and listens to peers. Contributions reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are consistently substantive and provide insights and direction for the class. Analyses are persuasive and thoughtful. Group dynamics are improved by this student’s presence. No unexcused absences.
B	Makes a sincere effort to support, engage, and listen to peers. Contributions reflect thorough preparation. Ideas are substantive, they provide good insights, and frequently provide useful direction for the class discussion. Analyses are persuasive and are grounded in the required course materials. The quality of group discussions and exercises are improved by this student’s contributions. No more than one to two unexcused absences.
C	Has limited interaction with peers. Contributions reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas are generally useful but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Analyses are not well substantiated, may be only tangentially related to the course, or may not be compelling. The student may have several unexcused absences.
D	Virtually no interaction with peers. Adequate preparation is rare. Remarks tend to be unsubstantiated, irrelevant, or inappropriate to the discussion at hand. The student may have many unexcused absences.
F	Does not interact with peers. Contributions reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered do not provide a constructive direction for the class and are often obvious or confusing. Integrative comments and effective analyses are absent. The student may have many unexcused absences.

Reading

The readings are the foundation of the course. Students should read all of the required materials before class and be prepared—with notes and question—to discuss the major issues raised therein.

You will be asked to rely on various critical and interpretive skills to explore the theories and concepts presented. Students are also encouraged to suggest additional readings based on your interests and to circulate relevant texts (news articles, multimedia clips, event notices etc.) to each other throughout the course. Feel free to share these directly on the Quercus discussion board or to bring them to my attention for distribution in class.

Assignments

In addition to ongoing participation, in order to successfully fulfill the requirements for the course, students must complete one reflective essay (due in class on December 4th) and a major research project (components are due throughout the second semester, with the final 20-page paper due in class on April 1st). Ongoing exploratory assignments will also be used to stimulate discussion. Details of each assignment will be distributed in class.

Evaluation

The grade for the class will be determined as follows:

Participation	30%
Exploratory Assignments	10%
Reflective Essay	20%
Research Project	40%

Academic Policy:

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and achieving course goals. The assignments in this course are designed to give you an opportunity to learn important skills and concepts by making honest attempts through your own thinking, writing, and hard work. I am strongly committed to assigning grades based on my students' honest efforts to demonstrate learning in this course.

Academic dishonesty in any form will thus not be tolerated.

Acts of academic dishonesty include:

- copying material word-for-word and not acknowledging the source by placing the text within quotation marks, even with a citation
- submitting work produced by someone else as though it was your own (e.g. a friend's paper, work purchased from a custom essay site)
- submitting the same work, in part or in whole, for multiple courses
- "editing" that results in a paper which is no longer entirely your own work.

For a complete list of offences, see section B of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Late submissions of any assignment will be penalized 5% for each 24 hours after the deadline. If you have extenuating circumstances that are affecting your ability to meet deadlines, please speak with me in office hours as soon as you can.

Email Policy

Please use your U of T email for course related correspondence. Be sure to include a meaningful subject line that includes the course code. I will try to respond to email within 1-2 working days. I do not typically reply to emails within 24 hours of an assignment due date.

Other Resources

College Registrar

Your college registrar is available for both general academic advising and personal problem solving. Your college is responsible for holistic advising that takes into account all the elements of student life: academic, personal, financial, and more. If you are facing challenges or have questions about how to succeed at the University of Toronto, this office should be your first point of contact.

Accessibility

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Writing

The University of Toronto offers many helpful resources and tools to aid students in academic writing. No matter your writing ability, I strongly suggest that you familiarize yourself with the workshops, tutoring services and advice guides provided at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Information about the English Language Learning program (ELL)—a useful resource for multilingual students—is available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

The following books are also recommended for writing and reading guidance.

- William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White (1959). *The Elements of Style*. New York: Macmillan [abridged version also available online at: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>]
- Joseph M. Williams (2009) *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (3rd Edition). New York: Pearson.
- Mortimer J. Adler and C. L. Van Doren (1972) *How to Read a Book*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Libraries

The U of T library system is an extraordinary resource for accessing information, conducting research and enhancing your learning. I especially encourage students to consult with librarians for assistance on their research projects. In addition, the following guide, How to Cite: <http://guides.library.utoronto.ca/citing> will be helpful for this class.

Readings

There is one required book for the class available for purchase at the U of T Bookstore: Jay Pitter and John Lorinc's *Subdivided: City-Building in an Age of Hyper-Diversity* (Coach House Books, 2016). All other materials will be made available through the course Quercus site or the U of T library system.

Weekly Schedule

Theorizing (Urban) Social Justice

What do we mean by social justice? Is justice contextual or universal? For example, does social justice look different in the global north and the global south? How do systems of justice and injustice come to be? How do they change over time? (How) does the city require us to rethink categories of justice and injustice?

September 11: Theorizing Social Justice I

James Connolly and Justin Steil. 2009. "Introduction: Finding Justice in the City." in *Searching for the Just City*. Marcuse et al. (eds.) New York: Routledge. pp 1-16.

James DeFilippis and Juan Rivero. 2014 "Just Cities." in *Cities and Social Change*. Paddison and McCann (eds.) London: Sage. pp 186-198.

September 18: Theorizing Social Justice II

*NO CLASS MEETING

Students should watch *one* of the following films:

- My Brooklyn (U of T libraries)
- The Pruitt Igoe Myth (U of T libraries)
- Ekumenopolis (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maEcPKBXV0M>)
- Citizen Jane (U of T libraries)
- The Downtown Project (https://www.nfb.ca/film/the_downtow_project/)
- It Started Raining (<https://www.ainceputploia.com/>)

September 25: Theorizing Social Justice III

Susan Fainstein. 2010. *The Just City*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp 23-56.

Clarissa Hayward and Todd Swanstrom. 2011. *Justice and the American Metropolis*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp 1-30.

Iris Marion Young. 2004. "Five Faces of Oppression" adapted from I. M. Young *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 39–65.

October 2: The Particularities of Cities and Space

Ed Soja. 2009. "The city and spatial justice." *justice spatiale/spatial justice*. n° 01, September.

Peter Marcuse. 2009. "Spatial justice: derivative but causal of social injustice." *justice spatiale/spatial justice*. n° 01, September

October 9: Global Urban Justice

Benjamin Barber. 2013. *If Mayors Ruled the World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 177-239.

October 16: The Right to the City

UN Habitat. 2005. "Urban Policies and the Right to the City" Discussion Paper. <http://www.hic-mena.org/documents/UN%20Habitat%20discussion.pdf>

Atlas of Urban Utopias. 2019. <https://transformativecities.org/atlas-of-utopias/>

Accessing the Diverse City

How do different “differences” matter to questions of (in)justice? How do social hierarchies—of for example, race, class, gender, and ability—become cemented in the urban environment? Is the pursuit of urban diversity compatible with the desire for universal equality, democracy, and liberty?

October 23: Plural Identities/Differences

Jay Pitter. 2016. “Introduction.” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 5-12.

Beyhan Farhadi. 2016. “Identity and the City: Thinking Through Diversity.” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 13-30.

October 30: Class

Friedrich Engels. 1845. “The Great Towns” in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. London: Penguin Classics. Also available at

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/>

David Hulchanski. 2010. *The Three Cities within Toronto: Income Polarization among Toronto's Neighbourhoods, 1970-2005*. Toronto: Cities Centre, University of Toronto.

November 6: NO CLASS: READING WEEK

November 13: Race/Ethnicity/Culture

Franz Fanon. 1961. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York Grove Weidenfeld. pp 35-43.

Noreen Ahmed-Ullah. 2016. “Brampton, AKA ‘Browntown.’” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 5-12.

Scott Neigh and Rabea Murtaza. 2017. “Anti-Racism at the Neighborhood Level” (podcast). Listen at: http://talkingradical.ca/2017/06/14/trr-east_enders_against_racism/

November 20: Sex/Gender

Dolores Hayden. 1980. “What would a non-sexist city be like? Speculations on housing, urban design, and human work.” *Signs*. 5(3) pp 170-187.

Toronto Women’s City Alliance. 2014. “Making Equality Matter: Municipal Literacy Toolkit.” <http://www.twca.ca/resources/>

November 27: Sexuality

Lawrence Knopp. 1994. “Social justice, sexuality, and the city”. *Urban Geography*. 15 pp 644-660.

Catherine Jean Nash. 2013. “Queering neighbourhoods: Politics and practice in Toronto” *Acme: International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*. 12 (2) pp 193-213.

December 4: Ability

Rob Imrie. 2001. “Barrierred and bounded places and the spatialities of disability.” *Urban Studies*. 38(2) pp 231-237.

Denise DaCosta. 2016. “Navigating the City with an Invisible Illness: The Story of Dorothy.” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 75-77.

Karen Pitter. 2016. “Culture and Mental Illness.” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 78-86.

REFLECTIVE ESSAY DUE

Patterns of Injustice/Struggles for Justice

What does it mean to understand contemporary urban problems as social justice issues? How are important urban resources—such as housing, mobility, public space, and decision making—produced, distributed, and used? Who has access and who is denied access to these goods? How do activist groups in the city make claims to resources and rights using a social justice framework?

January 8: Housing I

Andrew Herscher. 2019. “Settler Colonial Urbanism: From Waawiyaataanong to Detroit at Little Caesars Arena” *Platform*. August 8. <https://www.platformspace.net/home/settler-colonial-urbanism-from-waawiyaataanong-to-detroit-at-little-caesars-arena>

January 15: Housing II

Leslie Kern. 2016. “From toxic wreck to crunchy chic: A photo essay” *Society and Space*. View at: <https://societyandspace.com/material/article-extras/from-toxic-wreck-to-crunchy-chic-a-photo-essay-leslie-kern/>

Loretta Lees, Hyun Bang Shin and Ernesto López-Morales. 2016. “Slum Gentrification” in *Planetary Gentrification*. London: Polity Press. pp 140-170.

RESEARCH QUESTION DUE

January 22: Mobility I

Eric Mann. 2016. “Mobility in the Divided City.” in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 208-219.

Sean Hertel, Roger Keil and Michael Collens. 2015. Switching Tracks: Toward Transit Equity in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. http://suburbs.apps01.yorku.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Switching-Tracks_9-March-2015.pdf

January 29: Mobility II

Stefan Kipfer. 2012. “Free Transit and Beyond.” *The Bullet*. No. 738.

<https://socialistproject.ca/content/uploads/2013/08/freetransit.pdf>

Teresa Caldeira. 2013. “Sao Paulo: The City and it’s Protests.” *Open Democracy*, July 5.

(<https://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/teresa-caldeira/sao-paulo-city-and-its-protest>)

Leá Wester. 2017. Matatus: Is Small-scale Transportation becoming Trendy? *Forum Villes Mobiles*.

April 11. (<http://en.forumviesmobiles.org/2017/03/29/matatus-small-scale-transportation-becoming-trendy-3581>)

RESEARCH PROSPECTUS DUE

February 5: Public Space I

Daisy Couture et al. (2018) *On this patch of grass: city parks on occupied land*. Block Point NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Seth Low and Kurt Iveson. 2016. “Propositions for More Just Urban Public Spaces.” *City*, 20(1): 10-31.

February 12: Public Space II

Asmaa Malik. 2016. "Neighbourhood Watch: Racial Profiling and Virtual Gated Communities." in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 87-102.

Rana Dasgupta. 2016. *Capital*. pp. 1-27.

February 19: NO CLASS- READING WEEK

February 26: Decision Making I

Sherry Arnstein. 1969. "A ladder of citizen participation." *Journal of the American Institute of planners*. 35(4) pp 216-224.

RESEARCH PAPER FIRST DRAFT WORKSHOP

March 4: Decision Making II

Mariana Valverde. 2016. "A Tale of Two – or Three – Cities: Gentrification and Community Consultations." in *Subdivided*. Pitter and Lorinc (eds.) Toronto: Coach House Press. pp 199-207.

Bertie Russel and Oscar Reyes. 2017. "Eight lessons from Barcelona en Comú on how to Take Back Control." *Open Democracy*. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/oscar-reyes-bertie-russell/eight-lessons-from-barcelona-en-com-on-how-to-take-bac>

Sharing of Research

March 11: Student presentations I

March 18: Student presentations II

March 25: Student Presentations III

April 1: Student Presentations IV

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE