

## US Urban History, 1619-Present

**Day:** Thursdays

**Time:** 11:00 AM–12:55 PM Central

**Mode:** Online

Professor Paige Glotzer

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Email: [pglotzer@wisc.edu](mailto:pglotzer@wisc.edu)

Office: Humanities 4116

Mailbox: Humanities 4024

### **Description**

Samuel Johnson once said “When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford.” As apt today as when Johnson said it in 1777, cities continue to inspire the imagination and raise possibilities for how people live. Historians have echoed Johnson’s sentiment; we have yet to tire of cities. Urban history has long been a distinct sub-discipline, with its own professional infrastructure, debates, and scholarly turns. This seminar provides a long sweep of US urban history. It both serves to introduce students to what it means to do urban history and expand students’ toolsets for approaching their own scholarly interests. Major themes for the semester reflect major debates in the field, including the following: how cities have been sites of global movement of capital, ideas, and people; the relationship between local and national politics; how historical actors negotiate urban spaces and systems; shifting urban publics; and, finally, conceptualizing urban growth.

### **Class Zoom Information**

Access via Canvas or directly through Zoom

Direct Zoom Link:

<https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/94332809339?pwd=MGtuWG4vNmpkdURUOGZyS3hIRmhQQT09>

Zoom Information:

Meeting ID: 943 3280 9339

Passcode: 296408

### **Virtual Office Hours**

Time/Date: Thursdays, 12:55–2:55 PM Central or by appointment

Information for Virtual Office Hours:

Access via Canvas or directly through Zoom

Direct Zoom Link:

<https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/95343981392?pwd=Smp5YWVhbjlprSW16K2NjZFPBd0lBdz09>

Zoom Information:

Meeting ID: 953 4398 1392

Passcode: 533575

The purpose of office hours is to provide a regular time where you can talk about academic matters. This may include questions about the reading or assignments, graduate training, the job market, or chatting about a topic that sparked your interest during class. No appointment is necessary.

### **Grades**

Weekly Seminar Attendance and Participation – 35%  
Posting Reading Responses to Canvas on Time – 10%  
Leading Class Discussion – 5%  
Final Assignment – 50%

### **Digital Considerations**

The following guidelines will facilitate creating a welcoming, engaging seminar community.

- 1) Keep your camera on when possible
- 2) Mute yourself if you are not speaking
- 3) Be generous and understanding when we experience technical difficulties.
- 4) Be generous and understanding when members of our class have more limited bandwidth or differential access to technology.
- 5) Provide feedback on what is or is not working. All of our voices are needed to make our seminar the best that it can be.

### **Accessibility and Accommodations**

I am committed to creating a digital classroom where everyone can feel welcomed, included, and equipped to learn. If you have or think you may have a disability (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical) I encourage you to speak with me directly and/or contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center to ensure your needs are being met. Possible things to consider include, but are not limited to:

Can you comfortably use your home setup to attend digital meetings? Are you able to take notes in a way that helps you learn? Do you need assistance with writing, typing, or note-taking? Can you focus? Has your ability to focus changed? Would you benefit from assistive technology? Would flexible deadlines or extended time better enable you to complete assignments?

The McBurney Disability Resource Center  
Phone: (608) 263-2741 Address: 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104  
Email: [mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu](mailto:mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu)

### **Childcare Policy**

I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

1. All breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary.
2. Children are welcome on camera.
3. You do not need to inform me ahead of time if you are bringing a child to class. We can think of them as junior scholars auditing to determine if they want to study history.
4. Finally, I understand that the fatigue caused by parenting can be a barrier to completing coursework. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students regardless of parenting

status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

To learn more about UW-Madison's pregnant and parenting student policies and resources, see <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/guide/accommodations-for-life-events/pregnancy-and-parenting-students/>

### **Credit Hours Policy**

Students may take this course for 1-3 credits. The credit standard for the course is met by an expectation of at least 45 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities for each credit (1 credit = at least 45 hours; 2 credits = at least 90 hours; 3 credits = at least 135 hours). For all students, these activities will include group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week. Other course activities and assignments (reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, etc) will vary depending on the number of credits for which a student is enrolled. These differing levels of activities and expectations are described in the syllabus.

### **Reading**

You can purchase copies from the University Bookstore or a vendor of your choice or see if an e-book is available through the UW library. All books will be on reserve at College Library. Another option is to place requests through interlibrary loan for books. Interlibrary Loan also scans book chapters.

### **Weekly Responses to Canvas**

#### **Due Date: Wednesdays at 2:00 PM Central**

Beginning the Wednesday before the *first meeting*, each student will post a 250-500-word response to the readings on Canvas. The content of the responses is not graded. However, the more thought you put into the responses, the more prepared you are likely to be for seminar discussion.

There is no right or wrong approach to reading responses. Examples include thinking through themes, evaluating the author's arguments, or posing questions.

If you have technical difficulties with Canvas, email your response to Professor Glotzer.

### **Class Discussion Leader**

Beginning the second week of the semester one person will begin the seminar with a 5-10-minute informal presentation summarizing the book, discussing the author's argument, articulating the historiographic intervention, and offering any additional thoughts.

Presenters do not submit a Canvas response the week they are presenting.

### **Final Assignment**

#### **Due Date: Varies**

Since goal of the final assignment is to be useful for you, you may select from the different options listed below. Choose an assignment that best furthers your short-term goals as well as your long-term career goals.

If you are a US historian, this class can satisfy your pre-19<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, or 20<sup>th</sup> century coursework requirement. Your final assignment must focus on the time period of the requirement you will satisfy. Consult your advisor and Leslie Abadie to ensure you are meeting your program requirements.

#### Final Assignment Options:

*Paper* – 10-15-page traditional double-spaced paper. This paper will draw from class material and does not require original archival research. Consult your old reading responses and class notes if you need inspiration for your argument. You may bring in primary and secondary material from outside of class, but should not duplicate another paper you have already written. Not only are seminar papers important opportunities to flex your intellectual muscles, but they might become a useful rehearsal for the approaches, questions, or themes you will incorporating into your own scholarship.

*Synthetic Academic Review Essay* – Imagine the *Journal of Urban History* has invited you to write an extended review essay on three of the books we have read this semester. Lookup the journal's essay word count, style guidelines, and intended audience. Read at least two of its review essays that address multiple books. Write your own essay conforming to the journal's requirements. Submit the citations of the two essays you read along with your review.

*Mock Abstract, Conference Paper, and In-Class Presentation* – This is a multi-step assignment. Imagine you are putting together a conference paper proposal for an upcoming Urban History Association conference.

- 1) Prepare a 250-word abstract you plan to submit in the hopes of getting your paper accepted. You will then email this abstract to Professor Glotzer by an arranged date. The conference planning committee (aka Professor Glotzer) will give you feedback and accept you to the conference.
- 2) Write the mock conference paper. This is often 7-10 double-spaced pages for a 15 to 20-minute presentation. Usually panel commenters silently bristle when panelists give them papers that are far too long to be presented in the allotted time. It is good to develop the professional habit of not creating extra labor for your very busy colleagues at conferences.
- 3) Present this in class in a mock panel presentation complete with audience Q&A. Keep in mind that while this is a shorter writing assignment, it has an earlier deadline given the need to have this ready during the semester in order to present it in class.

*Grant Application* – Identify a grant or fellowship for which to plan to apply within the next two years. Draft the application and turn in any required supporting material such as CV, writing sample, statement, and budget.

*Prospectus Draft and Workshop* – Draft your dissertation prospectus. Key components usually include the following: a description of the project, scholarly contribution, historiographical overview, survey of your primary sources and justification for your selection of these types of sources, a research plan with actual archives listed, a timeline for completing the dissertation, and short chapter summaries that are understood to be highly speculative. Remember that

everyone knows the project and timeline will evolve. Prospectuses are working documents that often serve as a basis for grant applications and job market material. Pre-circulate the draft to Professor Glotzer and your classmates a week before we hold a 45-minute long workshop. This assignment has an earlier deadline given the need to have this ready during the semester in order to present it in class.

*Dissertation Chapter Draft and Workshop* – Draft a complete chapter of your dissertation, footnotes. Include a short summary of no more than one page of how the chapter relates to the larger project to help me contextualize the draft. Pre-circulate the draft to Professor Glotzer and your classmates a week before we hold a 45-minute long workshop. This assignment has an earlier deadline given the need to have this ready during the semester in order to present it in class.

*Other* – To be worked out in consultation with Professor Glotzer. If you are interested in pursuing jobs other than traditional tenure track jobs, this might be an opportunity to think about what kind of skills you most need to sharpen or what credentials you want to have. The assignment should broadly relate to US urban history.

## Schedule

### **Week 1 September 9**

- Leslie M. Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1823*

### **Week 2 September 16**

- Shannon Lee Dawdy, *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans*

### **Week 3 September 23**

- Kyle Roberts, *Evangelical Gotham: Religion and the Making of New York City, 1783-1860*

### **Week 4 September 30**

- Carl Smith, *City Water, City Life: Water and the Infrastructure of Ideas in Urbanizing Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago*

### **Week 5 October 7**

- David Schley, *Steam City: Railroads, Urban Space, and Corporate Capitalism in Nineteenth-Century Baltimore*

### **Week 6 October 14**

- Katie Hemphill, *Bawdy City: Commercial Sex and Regulation in Baltimore, 1790-1915*

### **Week 7 October 21**

- Mary Ryan, *Taking the Land to Make the City: A Bicoastal History of North America*

### **Week 8 October 28**

- Jessica M. Kim, *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865-1941*
- William Sites, “Global City, American City: Theories of Globalization and Approaches to Urban History,” *Journal of Urban History* 29, no. 3 (March 2003): 333–346.

**Week 9 November 4**

- Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940*

**Week 10 November 11**

- Simon Balto, *Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power*

**Week 11 November 18**

- Carmelo Esterrich, *Concrete and Countryside: The Urban and the Rural in 1950s Puerto Rican Culture*
- La Brega Podcast, Episode 2, “Levittown, Where the Good Life Begins”/ “Levittown, donde la buena vida comienza” Bilingual audio files and transcripts uploaded to Canvas. Streaming audio and transcripts also available at:  
<https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/la-brega/episodes>

**Week 12 November 25 – No Class – Thanksgiving Recess**

**Week 13 December 2**

- Destin Jenkins, *The Bonds of Inequality: Debt and the Making of the American City*
- Bench Ansfield, “The Crisis of Insurance and the Insuring of the Crisis: Riot Reinsurance and Redlining in the Aftermath of the 1960s Uprisings,” *Journal of American History* 107, no. 4 (March 2021): 899–921.

**Week 14 December 9**

- Davarian Baldwin, *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower: How Universities Are Plundering our Cities*