

**HSPV 638 / CPLN 687: PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE CITY:  
The Visual Construction of Urban and Suburban America**

*At the discretion of the instructor, this syllabus is subject to modification during the semester.  
For the very latest updates (e.g., to readings, assignments), refer to Canvas.*

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Office: G-15 Meyerson Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 2-3pm, via Zoom

You must sign up in advance (<https://francescaammon.youcanbook.me/>) to receive your individual Zoom link. Other times possible, to be arranged via email.

Spring 2021

Online via [Zoom](#)

Wednesdays 9:00-11:50am ET



Source: Chris Jordan, *In Katrina's Wake* (2005).

### **Course Description**

This seminar explores the intersecting social and cultural histories of photography and the urban and suburban built environment. No prior background in photography is necessary. Since its inception in 1839, photography has provided a critical means for documenting change in American cities and suburbs. We might characterize the medium's evolution as moving through four major phases: 1) celebration of the great structures of the industrial city; 2) documentation and attempted reform of the social life of Progressive and New Deal era cities; 3) critique of postwar cities and suburbs; and 4) reflection on change in the post-industrial city. Each week, we will compare at least two image collections as the basis for our discussion. While authorship by individual photographers provides the entry point to many of these conversations, our primary focus will be the images' portrayal of urban and suburban people, structures, and space. Through our investigations, we will explore how photography's dual documentary and aesthetic properties have helped to reflect and transform the city, both physically and culturally.

## Course Objectives

This course will train students in the application of visual research methods to the study of urban history. We will practice the skills of reading photographs as we would any other archival document, as well as consider the diverse types of urban photographic archives that exist, from gallery prints, to journalistic photo-essays, bureaucratic archives, art books, and digital mappings. When possible, we will try to view these images in their archival context (e.g., museums, galleries, libraries)—although COVID will likely limit us to those institutions' digital repositories this year. Finally, the course will demonstrate the place of photography as much more than just documentary illustration, but also critically-inflected evidence imbued with cultural values through its production, circulation, and reappropriation in broader society.

## Course Requirements

- (1) *Class Discussion, Preparation, and Participation*: Thoughtful and active participation is vital to a successful seminar; it represents 20% of the course grade. Included is the requirement that each student post 1-2 discussion questions to Canvas (in the Discussions section) by 6pm the night before each class. Feel free to build upon others' postings. Students can skip two weeks of discussion questions (but not Week 2). More than two skipped weeks of posting will result in a reduction in this portion of the grade. More than one unexcused absence from attendance in class will also result in a reduction in this portion of the grade.
- (2) *Seminar Presentation*: Each student will give a ~20 minute presentation at the start of one weekly meeting. Your presentation should offer a close reading of 1-2 images from that week and place it/them in the context of the readings and the overall topic for the week. When more than one student is presenting on a single day, presenters should coordinate in advance to avoid duplication. Presentation represents 10% of the course grade.
- (3) *Photo-Essay: Due Mar 17 (9am)*. Spend a few hours photographing Philadelphia or the built environment wherever you are located. Select ~8-12 of those images to pair with text (extended captions and/or a single narrative) to create a photo-essay about the city and its physical environment. Come to class prepared to reflect upon the experience of photographing the city and using images to create an argument. This assignment represents 20% of the course grade.
- (4) *15-Page Research Paper: Due Monday, May 3 (Noon)*.  
In this thesis-driven research paper, consider a collection of photographs we have not discussed in-depth during class. In a typical year, students are encouraged, but not required, to select a collection found in a local repository (e.g., Architectural Archives, City Archives, Temple Special Collections Research Center, Library Company of Philadelphia, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, etc.). In the current circumstances, however, I simply encourage you to select a collection to which you have reasonable access (either in person or online). Your paper should draw upon course readings to place the image collection in its appropriate historical and aesthetic context, analyze the content and structure of individual photographs and the overall set of images, and assess the meaning of the selected images—when produced, and as it may have changed over time. *Alternative topics are possible, but interested students should speak with the instructor early about such proposals.*

The final, double-spaced paper should follow the standards of scholarly writing, including incorporation of a bibliography and proper citations throughout. Citations should follow Chicago Manual of Style (the guide for which is available via [Franklin](#)). Be sure to caption and source all images, and reference each image at least once within the text.

The paper and preparatory assignments represent 40% of the grade.

Two ungraded preparatory assignments will help you develop your final paper:

- 1-2 paragraph preliminary topic proposal, including identification of major photographic archive plus a list of 3-5 sources (**due Feb 17, 9am**)
- Full proposal, including a ~500-word description of your topic and argument/research question, a one-page outline of the full paper, and a bibliography of ~10 primary and secondary sources (five of which should be annotated) (**due March 24, 9am**)

(5) *Final Presentation*: For the final class session (**April 28**), each student will give an ~8-minute presentation on their research paper. This represents 10% of the course grade. You must upload your presentation slides to Canvas by 8pm the night before (**April 27, 8pm**).

### Summary of Components of Course Grade

- 20% Seminar attendance and participation, including weekly discussion questions
- 10% Seminar presentation (20 minutes)
- 20% Photo-Essay (8-10 images, plus accompanying text)
- 10% Final Presentation (8-10 minutes)
- 40% Research paper (15 pages, plus images & bibliography) and preparatory assignments

### General Policies

#### Zoom Recordings:

To facilitate access for all class members, some synchronous sessions, including your participation, may be recorded. The recordings may be made available to the class for the duration of the semester. These recordings are solely for your personal, educational use and may not be shared, copied, or redistributed without the permission of Penn and the instructor. Note also that you are NOT allowed to record or screenshot any class sessions yourselves.

#### Zoom Etiquette:

*Video*: All students are encouraged to join the synchronous Zoom meetings with both audio and video (rather than by phone only) if possible. All students are also encouraged to unmute their video at all times. That said, if this is not always be possible, please discuss any challenges with the instructor offline.

*Audio*: For improved sound quality, all students should mute their audio when not speaking.

*Chat*: Given our small group size, please contribute all comments directly to the live audio conversation, rather than pasting written comments in the chat. The chat could be useful, however, for sharing links and image files as an aside.

On Privacy Considerations when Using Zoom, see: <https://www.isc.upenn.edu/security/privacy-using-zoom#Privacy-Data-Protections-with-Zoom->

### Academic Integrity

All students are responsible for following the policies (in particular, regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, and original work) contained in the PennDesign Student Handbook. For further info, see: [http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai\\_codeofacademicintegrity.html](http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html). If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to resolve those (e.g., by contacting the instructor, library staff, etc.). **There will be no tolerance for the reappropriation of others' language, images, or ideas without the proper use of quotation marks and/or citations.**

### Late Work

Unless you contact the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the deadline or have a last-minute emergency, the assignment grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter for each day that it is late. The instructor also reserves the right not to accept any late assignments.

### **COVID-19 Accommodations**

The instructor recognizes the challenges and uncertainties posed by the current moment and so aims to do whatever is possible to accommodate individual student circumstances. To that end, you are encouraged to contact the instructor with any questions or concerns. Please also reach out to Emily McCully, Director of Student Services at Weitzman School of Design, as another resource on this front.

Please consult <https://coronavirus.upenn.edu/> for the latest COVID-19-related announcements from the university.

At present, the syllabus includes no planned in-person field trips. Should conditions change over the course of the term to allow one or two such activities, the syllabus may change. Those students who are unable to join us for such in-person activities will pursue alternative accommodations.

### **Course Texts**

#### Book to Purchase:

Peter B. Hales, *Silver Cities: Photographing American Urbanization, 1839-1939* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

In stock at [BarnesandNoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com) for \$39.95; used copies available elsewhere.

We will be reading five chapters from this text, so I cannot place all of them online. I have scanned the first two chapters (the legal limit) in order to buy you some time. Please have your own copy of *Silver Cities* in hand in time for our class meeting on February 3. You are also welcome to obtain a borrowed copy through Interlibrary Loan.

### Optional Books:

The following books are all available as digital copies for one-hour loan through Penn Libraries, but you can also find relatively affordable versions of them in hard copy. I list them here for your reference, in case you would like to buy them. I include the Amazon prices for new paperbacks for reference, but of course you can buy them (new or used) elsewhere as well. There is, however, no expectation that you will purchase these unless you so desire.

Berenice Abbott and Elizabeth McCausland, *New York in the Thirties* (New York: Dover Publications, 1973). (originally *Changing New York* (New York: E.P. Dutton Co., 1939) Paperback available for purchase on [Amazon](#) for \$16.48.

Lewis W. Hine, *Men at Work; Photographic Studies of Modern Men and Machines* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977). (originally 1932) Paperback available for purchase on [Amazon](#) for \$11.95.

Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1890, 1904). (formerly on reserve)  
Be sure to read a version that includes the photos, not drawn illustrations (which is what the original 1890 version included).  
Amazon sells several Kindle versions with photos for \$0.99 ([here](#) and [here](#)).  
[Amazon](#) sells a paperback version for \$6.95.

Richard Wright and Edwin Rosskam, *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (New York: Viking Press, 1941). (formerly on reserve)  
[Amazon](#) sells a paperback version for \$15.67.

### Assigned Photograph Collections Available Digitally (formerly Reserve Books):

Most assigned photograph collections are held at the Fine Arts Library or Van Pelt Library. But, if they are temporarily available through HathiTrust's special COVID access policies, the hard copies are no longer available to us this term. Further, the university is not supporting hard copy reserves in any form this term. Therefore, I have linked to digital versions and, where appropriate, placed them on reserve, whenever possible.

Please note that most of these copies are available through HathiTrust's temporary COVID access policies, or the Internet Archive, both of which limit access to one user at a time via one-hour digital loans. This should be sufficient time for you to review the images and get an overall sense of an individual collection. You can also copy individual pages for reference if you like. Please plan accordingly to ensure that you are not all scrambling to view the sole online copy at the same time. Please also do not renew the book for more than your initial one-hour loan so that others will have a chance to use it.

Other collections (e.g., non-HathiTrust e-books, and HathiTrust e-books that are available in the public domain and not governed by the temporary COVID restrictions) are available online without limits on access (so, there is no time limit for use, and there is no limit on the number of simultaneous users). In these cases, the full document is also typically available for download as

a PDF. Wherever possible, I have tried to indicate any restrictions on digital use on both the syllabus and Canvas site.

Assigned Readings:

Supplementary readings—as well as a few digitized photograph collections and accompany texts—are accessible on websites or (as denoted by \*) scanned and available as PDFs on Canvas. There are no limits on access to these materials, and the PDFs are available for download if you prefer to read them offline.

**Additional Supports and Accommodations:**

The University of Pennsylvania – as well as its constituent departments, programs, and schools – has numerous support services and accommodations for students. Below is a list – that is not at all exhaustive – of some of the services offered at the University. Please feel free to reach out directly to the instructor if you need a referral or guidance navigating these services. The website and office of the [Vice Provost for University Life](#) will also have guidance for students in need.

COVID-19: <https://coronavirus.upenn.edu/>

Disabilities: [Student Disabilities Services](#)

Food Insecurity and other Emergency Funds: [First-Generation Low-Income Program](#)

Health: [Student Health Service](#)

Interpersonal Violence: [Penn Violence Prevention](#)

Learning Resources: [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#)

Mental Health: [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

Privacy Policy: [https://www.upenn.edu/about/privacy\\_policy](https://www.upenn.edu/about/privacy_policy) [Academic](#)

Public Safety: [Division of Public Safety](#)

Racial Justice: [Vice President for Social Equity and Community](#)

Sexual Harassment and Assault:

- [Office of the Chaplain](#) (students, staff, faculty or visitors)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (students)
- [LGBT Center](#) (students, staff or faculty)
- [Office of the Ombudsman](#) (students, staff or faculty)
- [Penn Women's Center](#) (students, staff or faculty)
- [Special Services Department](#), Division of Public Safety (students, staff, faculty, visitors)
- [Student Health Service](#) (students)
- [Title IX Coordinator](#) (complaints by/regarding staff, students, faculty or visitors)
- [Vice Provost for University Life](#) (students)

Substance Abuse: [Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Program Initiatives](#)

Teaching and Learning: [Center for Teaching and Learning](#)

## Summary of Weekly Schedule

| <u>Week</u>   | <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic</u>                               | <u>Assignment Due</u>             |
|---|-------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1.  | 1/20        | Introduction                               |                                   |
| <b>Part I: Celebrating Growth and Great Structures</b>                      |             |  |                                   |
| 2.  | 1/27        | The City as Early Photographic Subject     |                                   |
| 3.  | 2/3         | Aerial Perspectives                        |                                   |
| 4.  | 2/10        | The Modern, Vertical City of Skyscrapers   |                                   |
| <b>Part II: Investigating Social Life and Advocating Reform</b>             |             |  |                                   |
| 5.  | 2/17        | Social Documentary of the Poor             | <i>Preliminary Topic</i>          |
| 6.  | 2/24        | New Deal Landscapes                        |                                   |
| 7.  | 3/3         | Public Housing and Urban Renewal           |                                   |
|   | 3/10        | Spring Break                               |                                   |
| <b>Part III: Visualizing &amp; Critiquing the Postwar City &amp; Suburb</b> |             |  |                                   |
| 8.  | 3/17        | Self-Depicting Race in the City            | Photo Essay                       |
| 9.  | 3/24        | Postwar Street Photography and Social Life | Full Proposal                     |
| 10.   | 3/31        | Art in the Everyday Landscape              |                                   |
| 11.   | 4/7         | Critiques of Development                   |                                   |
| <b>Part IV: Change Over Time through Destruction and Preservation</b>       |             |  |                                   |
| 12.   | 4/14        | Picturing Decline                          |                                   |
| 13.   | 4/21        | Preserving the City                        |                                   |
| 14.   | 4/28        | Student Presentations                      | <i>Presentation Slides (4/27)</i> |
|   | 5/3         |  | <i>Final Paper (Noon)</i>         |

## Detailed Weekly Schedule

### WEEK 1 (1/20): Introduction

This introductory session will include a short slide lecture providing an overview of the themes of the course and an interactive discussion of the aesthetic and documentary potential of photography, particularly in relationship to the development of cities. We will also review the syllabus. For the second half of the class session, we will consider Camilo José Vergara's COVID-19 urban photographic projects. Students should ideally read the following background texts before our first class meeting. Students are also welcome to review the two online photograph exhibits in advance, although we will devote time to viewing and discussing them together during class time.

#### Reading:

- \*Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1980), 71-82. (originally in *Atlantic Monthly* 38 (1859))
- \*Peter B. Hales, "Introduction," in *Silver Cities: Photographing American Urbanization, 1839-1939* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 1-9.

#### Image Collections for in-Class Viewing and Discussion:

Camilo José Vergara with Chrysanthe Broikos, "Documenting Crossroads: The Coronavirus in Poor, Minority Communities," National Building Museum, March-April 2020, <https://www.nbm.org/exhibition/documenting-crossroads/>.  
Camilo José Vergara with Elihu Rubin, "Documenting Crossroads: The New Normal," National Building Museum, June 2020, <https://www.nbm.org/exhibition/the-new-normal/>.

## I. CELEBRATING GROWTH AND GREAT STRUCTURES

This module of the course will consider the use of photography to capture and celebrate urban growth, including architectural, engineering, and urban planning achievements.

- What choices have photographers made to imbue their images with a celebratory tone?
- Why might they have done so?
- How did these photographers select their subjects? What subjects did they leave out?
- How did technology shape photographic practice during this early era of the medium?

### WEEK 2 (1/27): The City as Early Photographic Subject

*(Potential virtual class visit to the Library Company of Philadelphia)*

This class will explore the strengths, limitations, and content of relatively early forms of photography. We will consider why the city offered such a compelling subject for this developing medium.

#### Image Collections:

George R. Fardon, *San Francisco Album: Photographs of the Most Beautiful Views and Public Buildings of San Francisco* (San Francisco: Herre & Bauer, 1856).



(formerly on reserve)

For class, review 33 views available online via [NYHS](#); 1999 reprint available for checkout in hard copy via [Franklin](#).

Review the general descriptions and holdings in the photograph collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia:

[http://www.librarycompany.org/collections/prints/pr\\_research.htm](http://www.librarycompany.org/collections/prints/pr_research.htm).

Reading:

\*Peter B. Hales, “Development of an Urban Photographic Style, 1839-1870” in *Silver Cities*, 11-95.

Optional:

Catherine E. Clark, “Imagination and Evidence: Visual History at Paris’s Municipal Historical Institutions,” in *Paris and the Cliché of History: The City and Photographs, 1860-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 14-49. E-book available via [Franklin](#).

### **WEEK 3 (2/3): Aerial Perspectives**

This class will examine urban photographs taken from above—from panoramas shot from atop tall buildings, to birds-eye views taken from airplanes. These types of images have functioned variously as booster projects, historical maps, artworks, and (later on) planning tools for urban renewal. We will examine two collections: Eadweard Muybridge’s famous panorama of San Francisco, and the work of the Fairchild Aerial Survey Company, the preeminent early twentieth-century commercial enterprise of this sort. Two online reference collections provide Philadelphia comparables to the Fairchild-style work.

Image Collections:

Eadweard Muybridge, “Panorama of San Francisco taken from the tower of the house of Mrs. Mark Hopkins,” 1878.

Available through [NYPL](#).

Mark Klett, “San Francisco Panorama,” 1990. (This panorama is a rephotography project of Muybridge’s earlier work.)

Available on [Mark Klett’s home page](#).

Thomas J. Campanella, *Cities from the Sky: An Aerial Portrait of America* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001). (formerly on reserve)

**PDF of selections to come on Canvas.**

See also (for reference):

Regional Planning Federation of the Philadelphia Tri-State District, Aerial Survey of the Philadelphia Region, ca. 1928, Map Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia. (See [Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network](#))

Dallin Aerial Survey Co., Aerial Survey of Philadelphia, PA, ca. 1930, Map Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia. (See [Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network](#))

Optional:

Eadweard Muybridge and Mark Klett, *One City/Two Visions: San Francisco Panoramas, 1878 and 1990* (San Francisco: Bedford Arts, Publishers, 1990). (formerly on

reserve – undergoing conservation; request through ILL if interested)

Reading:

Peter B. Hales, “Grand-Style Urban Photography, 1865-1893,” in *Silver Cities*, 123-211.

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan via [HathiTrust](#).

\*Thomas J. Campanella, “Introduction: Sherman M. Fairchild & the Airborne Camera,” in *Cities from the Sky*, 8-13.

\*Thomas J. Campanella, “Epilogue: The Airplane and the City,” in *Cities from the Sky*, 120-123.

Optional:

Thomas J. Campanella, “Cities from the Sky: An Aerial Portrait of America,” public lecture, MIT, November 8, 2001,

<https://techtv.mit.edu/videos/8f3d3ce987074818a2123fc04e8485e5/>.

#### **WEEK 4 (2/10): The Modern, Vertical City of Skyscrapers**

This class will examine photographs of the early twentieth-century vertical city of skyscrapers. Our case study will be images of some of New York City’s early tall buildings and bridges. You might consider, in particular, how gender informs these collections.

Image Collections:

Berenice Abbott and Elizabeth McCausland, *New York in the Thirties* (New York: Dover Publications, 1973). (originally *Changing New York* (New York: E.P. Dutton Co., 1939) (formerly on reserve)

E-book available via [Franklin](#) or temporarily (for one-hour loan) via [HathiTrust](#).

Paperback available for purchase on [Amazon](#) for \$16.48.

Lewis W. Hine, *Men at Work; Photographic Studies of Modern Men and Machines* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977). (originally 1932) (formerly on reserve)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan via [HathiTrust](#).

Paperback available for purchase on [Amazon](#) for \$11.95.

Reading:

\*Mary N. Woods, “The ‘New’ New York: Alfred Stieglitz and the City from Above and Below,” in *Beyond the Architect’s Eye: Photographs and the American Built Environment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 7-82.

Peter B. Hales, “Silver Metropolis: Photographing the Cosmopolitan City, 1915-1939,” in *Silver Cities*, 415-474.

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan via [HathiTrust](#).

## **II. INVESTIGATING SOCIAL LIFE AND ADVOCATING REFORM**

This module of the course will consider the relationship between photography and the investigative documentation, aestheticization, and attempted reformation of material and social life in the city, particularly among immigrant and minority groups.

- How has photography been used to advance reform movements?
- What are the ethics of the voyeurism inherent in much social documentary photography?

- How did photographers exploit photography's seemingly objective nature to advance their moral arguments? What messages might they have conveyed under the guise of objectivity? Why did the viewing audience believe them?
- In contrast to the distant past, how might the ubiquitousness of investigative photography today serve to negate its power to reform?
- How have some photographers after the Progressive era promoted the aestheticization of poor urban life, rather than its critique?

### **WEEK 5 (2/17): Social Documentary of the Poor**

*Preliminary Topic Due*

This class will examine the Progressive Era photography of activist journalist and photographer Jacob Riis in New York City's Lower East Side. A more contemporary counterpoint can be seen in Margaret Morton's photographs of community gardens.

#### Image Collections:

Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1890, 1904). (formerly on reserve)

Be sure to read a version that includes the photos, not drawn illustrations (which is what the original 1890 version included).

The two HathiTrust copies on this [link](#) include the photos.

Amazon sells several Kindle versions with photos for \$0.99 ([here](#) and [here](#)).

[Amazon](#) sells a paperback version for \$6.95.

Several versions – with drawn illustrations based upon the photos – are available for download via [HathiTrust](#). See, for example, the [1907 Scribner's publication](#), which can be fully downloaded or viewed online.

Diana Balmori and Margaret Morton, *Transitory Gardens, Uprooted Lives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). (formerly on reserve)

E-book available for one-hour loan via [Internet Archive](#) (must create free login to access).

#### Reading:

Peter B. Hales, "The Hidden Hand: Jacob Riis and the Birth of Reform Photography," in *Silver Cities*, 270-347.

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan via [HathiTrust](#).

\*Susan Sontag, "On Plato's Cave," in *On Photography* (1977), 3-24.

Kristin Hankins, "Framing the Litterbug: Picturing and Policing Public Cleanliness in Mid-Twentieth Century Philadelphia," *Journal of Urban History* (Online First December 14, 2020), <https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.library.upenn.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0096144220978780>.

(Note that this article is "out of time" for this week. But the points Hankins raises and the process she uses to dissect the photographs are relevant to our weekly theme and also to this point in the semester, more generally.)

### **WEEK 6 (2/24): New Deal Landscapes**

This class will examine federally-funded Farm Security Agency (FSA) photographs and privately conducted surveys of urban conditions in poor ethnic and racial enclaves of early-

to mid-twentieth century cities. Our case studies include a photo book on African American life in New York City and Chicago's South Side, as well as the smaller town and city work of New Deal image makers like Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Gordon Parks.

Image Collections:

Richard Wright and Edwin Rosskam, *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (New York: Viking Press, 1941). (formerly on reserve)

E-book available from [HathiTrust](#) via Franklin.

[Amazon](#) sells a paperback version for \$15.67.

Julia L. Foulkes, *To the City: Urban Photographs of the New Deal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011). (formerly on reserve)

E-book available via [Franklin](#).

See also the Farm Security Administration photographs available through the Library of Congress's "American Memory Collection," <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/> and/or the Photogrammar Project: <http://photogrammar.yale.edu/>.

Reading:

\*Nicholas Natanson, "The Photo-Series: Russell Lee, Chicago, and the 1940s," in *The Black Image in the New Deal: The Politics of FSA Photography* (1992), 142-202.

\*Julia L. Foulkes, "Introduction," in *To the City*, 1-9.

**WEEK 7 (3/3): Public Housing and Urban Renewal**

***Photo-Essay Due***

This class will examine the use of photography to document typically poor neighborhoods and substantiate redevelopment. Our case studies are government-funded public housing and urban renewal in post-World War II New York City, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Philadelphia. In follow-up to previous analysis of artists' photographic books, this week we will also consider a more expansive version of the archive, including the productions of journalists and municipal government agencies.

Image Collections:

"How Public Housing Transformed New York City, 1935-67 (Part 1), video, 2011, based upon New York City Housing Authority Collection, La Guardia and Wagner Archives, <https://youtu.be/Y-aH0zz1L38> (9 minutes). (Optional Part 2 video: <https://youtu.be/kJ62bxhj3iA> (8 minutes))

Leonard Nadel, "Leonard Nadel photographs for the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, 1948-1997," Getty Research Institute.

Select online photos available through the [GRI](#). (You may also explore other Getty photos taken by Nadel, including those depicting Pueblo del Rio, Aliso Village, and Community Redevelopment Agency projects.)

\*Ira Nowinski, "No Vacancy," in *Ira Nowinski's San Francisco: Poets, Politics, and Divas* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2006). (originally *No Vacancy: Urban Renewal and the Elderly* (San Francisco: C. Bean Associates 1979)). (formerly on reserve) Hard copy available in [Van Pelt](#).

Browse the use of photographs in Philadelphia redevelopment plans at "Philadelphia Neighborhoods—Histories, Plans and Futures," Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text & Image, University of Pennsylvania, <http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/PhilaNeighborhoods/>.

Reading:

Moriah Ulinskas, "Imagining a Past Future: Photographs from the Oakland Redevelopment Agency," *Places* (January 2019),  
[https://placesjournal.org/article/imagining-a-past-future/#.X\\_35jcl\\_PFY.mailto](https://placesjournal.org/article/imagining-a-past-future/#.X_35jcl_PFY.mailto).

Stefano Bloch, "Considering the Photography of Leonard Nadel," *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers* 74 (2012): 76-95,  
[http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2084/apps/doc/A296572514/ITOF?u=upenn\\_main&sid=ITOF&xid=76b9a0c1](http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2084/apps/doc/A296572514/ITOF?u=upenn_main&sid=ITOF&xid=76b9a0c1).

Francesca Russello Ammon, "Picturing Preservation: Photographs as Urban Renewal Planning Knowledge in Society Hill, Philadelphia," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (2018),  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0739456X18815742>.

Optional:

Luis Ferre-Sadurni, "The Rise and Fall of New York Public Housing: An Oral History," *New York Times*, July 9, 2018,  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/06/25/nyregion/new-york-city-public-housing-history.html>.

Themis Chronopoulos, "Robert Moses and the Visual Dimension of Physical Disorder: Efforts to Demonstrate Urban Blight in the Age of Slum Clearance," *Journal of Planning History* 13:3 (August 2014): 207-233,  
<http://jph.sagepub.com/content/13/3/207.abstract>.

Mike Christenson, "The Photographic Construction of Urban Renewal in Fargo, North Dakota." *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 23, no. 2 (2017): 116–128, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/645658>.

\*Samuel Zipp, "Remaking the Ethic of City Rebuilding," in *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 73-113.

\*John Tagg, "God's Sanitary Law: Slum Clearance and Photography in Late Nineteenth-Century Leeds," in *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 117-152.

## SPRING BREAK

### III. VISUALIZING AND CRITIQUING THE POSTWAR CITY AND SUBURB

This module of the course will consider photographers' efforts to capture and critique changing urban/suburban development.

- What are the ethics of photographing subjects with an eye toward critiquing their lifestyle?
- What criticisms have photographers and activists made in portraying this subject?
- How does scale (of both the photographic image and the subject depicted) change the meaning and function of a photograph?

- How do museum-style exhibits of the work of professional photographers shape representations of everyday people and landscapes?

### **WEEK 8 (3/17): Self-Depicting Race in the City**

Building upon the previously discussed work of Gordon Parks and others, this class will more closely consider depictions of African Americans by African American photographers. Our case studies include the controversial “Harlem of the Mind” exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (which included the work of photographers like James Van Der Zee), as well as LaToya Ruby Frazier’s more recent photographs of her hometown of Braddock, PA.

#### Image Collections:

Allon Schoener, ed. *Harlem on my Mind: Cultural Capital of Black America, 1900-1968* (New York: Random House, 1968).

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

LaToya Ruby Frazier, *The Notion of Family* (New York: Aperture, 2016).

Select photographs available on the artist’s [website](#).

#### Reading:

\*Bridget R. Cooks, “Black Artists and Activism, *Harlem on my Mind*, 1969,” in *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Art Museum* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 53-86.

E-book also available via [Franklin](#).

“Vision and Justice,” special issue of *Aperture* 223 (Summer 2016). <https://www-jstor-org.proxy.library.upenn.edu/stable/i40156960>. **Selections TBD.**

### **WEEK 9 (3/24): Postwar Street Photography and Social Life *Full Proposal Due***

This class will examine the lifestyles and structures spawned by the development of postwar cities and suburbs. Our case studies include photographs by Garry Winogrand, Lee Friedlander, Diane Arbus, and Bill Owens from the 1960s and ‘70s. These images of the social side of postwar life raise questions of art versus documentary and truth versus irony.

#### Image Collections:

Bill Owens, *Suburbia* (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1972). (formerly on reserve – Fine Arts Library locked case)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

Sarah Hermanson Meister, *Arbus, Friedlander, Winogrand: New Documents, 1967* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2017). (formerly on reserve)

Hard copy available for checkout via [Franklin](#). **Selections to be posted to Canvas.**

#### Reading:

\*Martha Rosler, “Post-Documentary, Post-Photography?” in *Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975-2001* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 207-244. (originally 1991)

\*Susan Sontag, “America Seen Through Photographs Darkly,” in *On Photography* (1977), 27-48.

## WEEK 10 (3/31): Art in the Everyday Landscape

(Potential virtual class visit to the Fisher Fine Arts Library)

This class will examine postwar photographers' identification of visual art in the everyday landscapes of commercial, residential, and roadway development. We will look, in particular, at the work of landscape photographers that is devoid of text. Through the digitization of Edward Ruscha's "Streets of Los Angeles" Archive at the Getty Research Institute, we will also consider the relationship between the digital and the material image.

### Image Collections:

Edward Ruscha, *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* ([Los Angeles]: 1966). (formerly on reserve – locked case)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

Robert Adams, *Denver: A Photographic Survey of the Metropolitan Area* (Denver: Colorado Associated University Press, 1977). (formerly on reserve)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

### Optional:

\**New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* (Rochester, NY: International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, 1975). (formerly on reserve)

### Reading:

\*"Every Building on the Sunset Strip: Interview with Ed Ruscha by Doris Berger," March 21, 2002, in *Within, Alongside, and Between Spaces*, Ed. Doris Berger (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 2003), 39-45.

Mariana Mogilevich, "Monuments and Mediocrity: Landmarking Los Angeles," *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 11, no. 1 (Summer 2014): 34-52, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/futuante.11.1.0035](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/futuante.11.1.0035).

\*Tod Papageorge, "What We Bought," in Robert Adams, *Robert Adams: The Place We Live: A Retrospective Selection of Photographs, 1964-2009*, vol. III (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

### Optional:

\*Virginia Heckert, "Revisiting Some Los Angeles Apartments," in *Ed Ruscha and Some Los Angeles Apartments* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2013), 6-32.

## WEEK 11 (4/7): Critiques of Development

This class will examine more explicit critiques of development—particularly the encroachment of the human landscape on the natural one—often through extended photo essays that combine image and text. As part of our discussion, we will revisit the place of aerial images in documenting the landscape.

### Image Collections:

\*Peter Blake, *God's Own Junkyard: The Planned Deterioration of America's Landscape* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964). (formerly on reserve)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

\*Dolores Hayden and Jim Wark, *A Field Guide to Sprawl* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004). (formerly on reserve)

Edward Burtynsky, "Landscapes of Oil: A Photo Essay by Edward Burtynsky," *Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2015): 163-169, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/jinteaffa.69.1.163>.

Optional:

*Manufactured Landscapes*, dir. Jennifer Baichwal (Mercury Films, 2007).  
87-minute video available for streaming via [Franklin](#).

Reading:

- \*Deborah Bright, "Of Mother Nature and Marlboro Men: An Inquiry into the Cultural Meanings of Landscape Photography," in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Richard Bolton (1989), 124-143. (originally 1985)
- \*Holly Wlodarczyk, "Intermediate Landscapes: Constructing Suburbia in Postwar American Photography," in *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes*, ed. Andrew Blauvelt (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2008), 101-112.

#### IV. CHANGE OVER TIME THROUGH DESTRUCTION AND PRESERVATION

This final module of the course will use several urban case studies to consider photographic efforts to visually document change over time in the buildings and spaces of individual cities. These images tell a story of rise, decline, and rebirth, as well as of construction, destruction, and remembrance. The change that occurs is both gradual and sudden, resulting, variously, from neglect, disinvestment, demolition, and/or disaster.

- How have some photographers inflected their work with a sense of nostalgia? What alternative attitudes do other images of ruin convey?
- How can photography help preserve the past? Conversely, how can it seem to sanction change?
- Is there a danger to aestheticizing ruin? Can it be avoided?
- How well can/do static photographic images convey change over time?
- In what ways do photographs of urban destruction suggest future paths to revitalization?

#### WEEK 12 (4/14): Picturing Decline

This week, we consider urban decline and destruction as depicted in photographs of San Francisco, New Orleans, Detroit, and Camden, NJ. We will also consider the high-end art book as a format in relationship to this subject matter, as well as the place of people in these often emptied-out landscapes.

Image Collections:

Mark Klett, *After the Ruins, 1906 and 2006: Rephotographing the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). (formerly on reserve)

E-book available for one-hour loan via [Internet Archive](#) (must create free login to access).

\*Robert Polidori, *After the Flood* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2006). (formerly on reserve)  
Selected images available as PDF on Canvas.

Yves Marchand and Romain Meffre, *The Ruins of Detroit* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2010). (formerly on reserve)



Selected images available on photographers' website:

<http://www.marchandmeffre.com/detroit>.

Camilo J. Vergara and Howard Gillette, Jr., *Invincible Cities Home Page*,

<https://invinciblecities.camden.rutgers.edu/intro.html>.

Optional:

David G. Spielman, *Katrinaville Chronicles: Images and Observations from a New Orleans Photographer* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press 2007). (formerly on reserve)

Hard copy available for checkout at [Van Pelt](#).

Camilo José Vergara, *American Ruins* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999). (formerly on reserve)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan from HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

Reading:

Dora Apel, "Detroit Ruin Images: Where Are the People?" in *Beautiful Terrible Ruins: Detroit and the Anxiety of Decline* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2015), 75-112.

E-books available via [Franklin](#) and [Franklin](#).

\*Rebecca Solnit, "The Ruins of Memory," in Mark Klett, *After the Ruins, 1906 and 2006*, 18-31.

\*Nick Yablon, "'Plagued by Their Own Inventions': Reframing the Technological Ruins of San Francisco, 1906-1909," in *Untimely Ruins: An Archaeology of American Urban Modernity, 1819-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 191-242.

William M. Taylor, "Composing Catastrophe: Robert Polidori's Photographs in 'After the Flood' and Comparative Visual Records of Post-Katrina New Orleans," *Invisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture* 16 (Spring 2011): 31-51, [http://www.rochester.edu/in\\_visible\\_culture/Issue\\_16/pdfs/taylor.pdf](http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/Issue_16/pdfs/taylor.pdf).

Optional:

\*Arnold Genthe, "Earthquake and Fire," in *As I Remember*, 87-97.

Eric S. Jenkins, "Seeing Katrina: Perspectives of Judgment in a Cultural/Natural Disaster," *Visual Communication Quarterly* 14:2 (Spring 2007): 90-107, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15551390701555969>.

Robert A. Beauregard, "Images of Renewal and Decline," *Invincible Cities Home Page*. <http://invinciblecities.camden.rutgers.edu/papers/RobertBeauregard.pdf>.

\*John Patrick Leary, "Detroitism," *Guernica Magazine*, January 2011.

Wes Aelbrecht, "Decline and Renaissance: Photographing Detroit in the 1940s and 1980s," *Journal of Urban History* (Online before Print, January 8, 2015), <http://juh.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/01/05/0096144214563500?papetoc> (requires Penn login).

Rebecca Solnit, "Detroit Arcadia: Exploring the Post-American Landscape," *Harper's Magazine*, July 2007, 65-73, <http://harpers.org/archive/2007/07/0081594>.

## WEEK 13 (4/21): Preserving the City

### Image Collections:

\*Richard Nickel, *Architectural Photographs by Richard Nickel* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1973). (formerly on reserve)

Hard copy available for loan at [Fine Arts Library](#).

Danny Lyon, *The Destruction of Lower Manhattan* (New York: Macmillan, 1969) (Rev. Ed., 2005). (formerly on reserve)

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

Robert Frishman, "Ghosts of Segregation," (Ongoing),  
<https://www.ghostsofsegregation.com/>. (See Gallery→Images section)

### Optional:

Browse the online HABS/HAER/HALS photograph collection at the Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/>.

### Reading:

Sarah Rogers Morris, "Richard Nickel's Photography: Preserving Ornament in Architecture," *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 10, no. 2 (Winter 2013): 67-80,  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/futuante.10.2.0067>.

Francesca Russello Ammon, "Captioning Milton-Parc," with photographs by Clara Gutsche and David Miller, in *What You Can Do with the City* (Canadian Centre for Architecture), October 20, 2017, <https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/issues/12/what-you-can-do-with-the-city/52534/captioning-milton-parc>.

### Optional:

C. Ian Stevenson, "Proving Preservation: Boston Subway Construction Photography, 1894–1897," *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 10, no. 2 (Winter 2013): 17-31,  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/futuante.10.2.0017>.

Richard Cahan, *They All Fall Down: Richard Nickel's Struggle to Save America's Architecture* (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994).

E-book temporarily available for one-hour loan on HathiTrust via [Franklin](#).

## WEEK 14 (4/28): Student Presentations

In our last class session, each student will give a presentation based upon their research paper in progress. Students should prepare supporting images and plan to speak for ~8 minutes each. Upload your slides to Canvas in .pdf format by 8pm the night before.

**FINAL PAPER DUE**  
**Monday, May 3, by noon**