

## **Geography 476: Women and the City**

*Dr. Becky Burnett, PhD*

*Office hours: Tues/Thurs 1:30-2:30*

*Class times: T/Th 2:30-4:20*

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*Smith 430*

*Denny 302*

*Course website: <https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/rburnett/40514/>*

### **Course Description**

How are gender identities linked to discourses about the city? How do gender identities and gender relations shape the social and material construction of different urban spaces, places, and landscapes; and vice versa? How do other social identities intersect with gender to produce varying experiences of different places, and even the same places and spaces? What sorts of changes have women (and other marginalized groups) brought about in cities? These are the sorts of questions that lie at the heart of this course. While the course has a nominal emphasis on women, there will be a strong focus on the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and other social markers and their role in influencing space, the political economy, and experiences in the city.

Students will begin the course with a theoretical overview of the debates, conceptualizations, and constructions of gender and urban spatial structures. Next, the course will focus specifically on case studies, approaches and policies that have influenced the empirical landscape of cities in the U.S. in the past century. Finally, we will turn toward alternatives to current interpretations of cities and identity both in terms of theory and material practices.

### **Learning Objectives**

We will learn together through readings, class discussion, group facilitations, guest presentations, films and fieldwork. As a 400-level course, this class is designed to improve and challenge students' academic skills in the areas of independent research, collaborative research, critical reading, thinking and writing, and political and geographical debate.

Once you have completed this course you will have: (1) gained a grounding in feminist urban geographies and gendered analyses of urban life and urban form; (2) a good grasp of some of the major topics addressed by urban geographers concerned with gender, and by feminist geographers interested in cities; (3) learned about conducting research into issues related to social justice issues and the city, and had some hands-on experience of doing research; and (4) improved your ability to read, write and think critically.

**Your Role:** to grapple with the ideas in class and readings and your peers' writing and conversation. You should puzzle through and **reflect on the reading**, not skim it; consistently demonstrate engaged, critical intelligence in your writing; and come to class with the required texts and materials. Perhaps most importantly, you will need to think through your own and your peers' contributions critically and engage in significant revision of your own thinking and writing.

### **Texts**

Each week you will be required to read several articles and/or book chapters. Usually these will need to be read by class time on Tuesday. The texts will be compiled in a course reader available at *Professional Copy and Print*.

### **Course Breakdown**

Group Facilitation	15%
Midterm Essay	20%
Final Paper and Presentation	30%
Fieldwork	20%
Class Participation	15%

While at present I have not scheduled any quizzes, if participation dwindles I may implement pop quizzes.

### **Brief Description of Assignments**

More specific instructions will be given as we begin each assignment.

#### *Group Facilitations*

Each student will be tasked with leading class discussion in a group on a related real-world event for one 40-minute class period during the quarter. The group tasked with leading will submit a brief lesson plan to me the day before they are to lead discussion. I will post a schedule and further instructions in the first week of class.

#### *Midterm Take Home Essay*

For your midterm, I will give you 2-3 take home essay questions. Using material from class, you will need to answer two of these questions in a total of 4-6 pages.

#### *Final Paper*

You will complete one paper based on your own critical engagement with a set of themes raised in the class. The paper will be approximately 8-10 pages long, double-spaced. The research paper is intended to give you the opportunity to explore in depth a topic that piques your intellectual curiosity. We will treat the paper as a quarter-long project that will require a proposal, rough draft and final draft. You will also be required to give a presentation based on your paper to the class.

### *Fieldwork*

The goal of the fieldwork is for you to engage in investigating an empirical question outside of the classroom. In this situation you will be asked to investigate first hand a theme from the course.

### *Class Participation*

Effective class participation is an important skill that needs practice to develop. Because participation is key to your learning I take it very seriously. In this particular context participation means not just talking in class but also listening to your peers and creating a space where everyone is invited to participate. It also means coming to class prepared, every time.

### **Grades**

To succeed in this class you will need a good understanding of class materials, evidence of independent research and analysis, and writing befitting that of a student of a 400-level course. You will need to make arguments that make sense and are based in academic research and analysis. I will expect you to be open to arguments made both by your peers and by me. When you make arguments in your papers, you will be expected to address the concerns of other writers who may not share your analysis of the issue. Some of the topics we address are emotional and controversial, that's OK, that is what makes them interesting. Arguments in papers, however, will need to be substantiated by research, and not simply opinions.

### **Course Rules and Regulations**

#### **Class/Email Etiquette**

Please arrive to class on time. If you do arrive late, do your best not to disturb the class. As a matter of respect to your classmates, do not email, text, listen to your ipod, or otherwise distract your classmates. To ensure that I see and respond to your emails, please have a descriptive subject line. Messages with inappropriate subjects, addresses, or introductions will not be read. I check my email frequently throughout the week but do not check my email often over the weekend.

#### **Readings, Events and Announcements**

We will be low-tech in class and relatively high-tech outside it. This distinction means that you will need pen, notebook paper, and hard copies or notes of texts during class; however, outside of class, you will operate in a mostly paperless environment. I will post all course documents on our **CommonView workspace**, where you can access the Catalyst Tools you will need to stay up to date on class assignments. I will post announcements, assignments, and electronic copies of all handouts on this site. **CHECK IT FREQUENTLY.** You may also be required to post drafts and conduct peer reviews via catalyst and we may potentially utilize the Go-Post discussion board.

### **Plagiarism**

Don't do it! If you ever have questions about documentation, please come see me—I'm happy to help answer questions and share strategies for avoiding plagiarism. In your writing for this class, you will reference academic texts, and you should be sure to provide proper and consistent citation when you reference others' work. I do expect your words and the ideas they express to be your own except when you clearly signal and name another source.

### **Submissions and Extensions**

Please submit all papers in 12-pt. Times New Roman (or comparable) font, double-spaced, unless assignment directions indicate a different format. Margins should not exceed an inch. All papers are due at the beginning of class. I will penalize late papers by .3 per day. Please talk to me if you feel you qualify for an extension.

### **Accommodations**

Please let me know if you need accommodation of any sort. I am happy to work with the UW Disability Service Office (DSO) to provide what you require, and I am very willing to take suggestions specific to this class to meet your needs. More information on support at UW may be found on the DSO web site at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/>

## Geography 476: Women and the City Course Reading Schedule

### **Week 1: Sept 26th Introduction to the course**

No class this week. You can pick up your course reader at Professional Copy and Print.

### **Week 2: Oct 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>: What is feminist geography?**

Home/work: This week we will unpack feminist geography. We will use media, popular culture and academic sources to analyze "gendered spaces" in the urban landscape, the workplace and on campus. Think about your own experiences of gendered space and what we have to gain/what may be left out from this concept.

### **Readings:**

1. Staeheli, Lynn and Patricia M. Martin (2000) "Spaces for feminism in geography," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 571: 135-150.
2. Pratt, Geraldine (2009) "Gender" and "Feminist geographies," in Ron J. Johnston, Derek Gregory, Geraldine Pratt and Michael Watts (eds.) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, (Fifth Edition), Blackwell: Oxford, UK and Cambridge, USA.
3. Doan, Petra L. (2010) The tyranny of gendered spaces: reflections from beyond the gender dichotomy. *Gender, Place and Culture* 17: 635-654.
4. Parker, Brenda. (2011) Material matters: gender and the city. *Geography Compass* 433-447.

### **Week 3: Oct 8<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>: Intersectionality and why it matters to urban geography**

Home/work: This week we will have our first group facilitation. We will also discuss the contributions to feminist geography made from other marginalized groups.

#### **Readings:**

1. Valentine, Gill. (2007). Theorizing and researching intersectionality: A challenge to feminist geography. *Professional Geographer* 59:1 10-21
2. hooks, bell. (1984). Black women: shaping feminist theory
3. Boyd, Jade (2010). Producing Vancouver's (hetero) normative nightscape. *Gender, Place, and Culture* 17: 169-189
4. Doan, Petra L. (2007). Queers in the American city: Transgendered perceptions of urban space". *Gender, Place and Culture* 14: 57-74

### **Week 4: Oct 15<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>: A just city for whom? Who is the city for?**

Home/work: This week we will begin a course-long investigation into the ways in which cities create and challenge injustice, privilege and marginalization. We will begin to look at how inequalities in cities are structured and entrenched through social policies and the built environment.

#### **Readings:**

1. Pulido, Laura. (2000). Rethinking environmental racism: white privilege and urban development in southern California. *Annals of the AAG*. 12-40
2. Klodawsky, Fran (2009) "Home spaces and rights to the city: Thinking social justice for chronically homeless women," *Urban Geography*, 30(6): 591-610.
3. Carr, J., E. Brown, and S. Herbert (2009) "Inclusion under the law as exclusion from the city: negotiating the spatial limitations of citizenship in Seattle," *Environment and Planning A*, 41(8) 1962-1978.

### **Week 5: Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup>: Personal Safety and Policing**

Home/work: Midterm questions will be posted Monday at noon to our website. We will spend some class time on Tuesday discussing your questions. A hard copy of your completed midterm will be due in class Thursday.

#### **Readings:**

1. Whitzman, Carolyn (2007) Stuck at the front door: gender, fear of crime and the challenge of creating safer space, *Environment and Planning A* 39(11) 2715-2732.
2. Valentine, Gill (1989) "The geography of women's fear," *Area*, 21(4): 385-390.
3. Kern, Leslie (2010) Selling the 'scary city': Gendering freedom, fear and condominium development in the neoliberal city, *Social and Cultural Geography*, 11: 3, 209-230.
4. Goldstein, Joseph. (2013) Judge rejects New York's Stop and Frisk Policy. *New York Times*

### **Week 6: Oct 29<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup>: Urban poverty and the new American economy**

Home/work: Since the 2008 recession, nearly 70% of jobs regained are low-wage. Women currently work the bulk of these jobs and make up 2/3rds of minimum wage workers. At the same time, social supports have also been cut. This week we will explore what this means for women, families and other vulnerable populations.

#### **Readings:**

1. Squires, G. D. and C.E. Kubrin (2005) "Privileged places: race, uneven development and the geography of opportunity in urban America," *Urban Studies*, 42: 1, 47-68.
2. Diana Pearce (2007). "Overlooked and undercounted: Wages, work and poverty in Washington state". Pages 1-35.
3. David Moberg. (2002). Martha Jernegon's new shoes: the contribution of local living-wage ordinances" pages 108-121.

### **Week 7: Nov 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>: Urban policy and social control, 1**

Home/work: This week we will watch the film "The House I live In" and answer questions about the influence of the prison system on marginalized communities.

#### **Readings:**

Selections from:

Alexander, Michelle. (2011) *The New Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. (Not in reader. This will be available via PDF on our website).

### **Week 8: Nov 12<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>: Urban Policy and Social Control, 2**

#### Home/work:

This week, I will check in with you about your research paper topics. This is a good time to revisit articles, movies and speakers we have had thus far to see what you are most interested in writing about. Once you have narrowed down a few ideas, spend a little time researching them. Is there enough information on this topic? Too much? Decide if you need to narrow or broaden your topic before you begin writing your draft.

#### **Readings:**

1. Herbert, Steve. (2008). "Dealing With Disorder: Social Control in the Post-industrial City," *Theoretical Criminology* 12(1), 2008, 5-30 [with Katherine Beckett].
2. Tony Sparks (2010) "Broke Not Broken: Rights, Privacy and Homelessness in Seattle" pages 842-862.
3. Rivera, Whitney (2008) "Addressing the Real Problem of Racial Profiling in Seattle, Washington." *Journal of Race, Gender, and Ethnicity*. vol. 2, March 2008. pages 2-36.

### **Week 9: Nov 19<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Creating a just city**

1. Cahill, Caitlin (2007) "Negotiating grit and glamour: Young women of color and the gentrification of the Lower East Side," *City and Society*, 19(2): 202-231.
2. Sullivan, Richard and Kimi Lee; and Monisha Das Gupta's (2008) Contributions to the "Comparative perspectives symposium: women's labor activism" *Signs* 33(3): 525-537.
3. David Harvey (2012). "Another City is Possible".

- <http://towardfreedom.com/globalism/3030-another-city-is-possible-an-interview-with-david-harvey>
4. Nik Heynen (2010). "Cooking up non-violent civil disobedient direct-action for the hungry: Food not bombs and the resurgence of radical democracy" pages 1225-1240

**Week 10: Nov 26<sup>th</sup>: Peer Review and Thanksgiving Holiday**

This week we will have an in-class peer review on Tuesday. There are no readings this week to help you develop your drafts.

Home/work: For Tuesday, bring in TWO hardcopies of a full and complete draft of your final research paper. The draft must be at least 5 pages and contain an introduction as well as full body paragraphs and correct citations.

**Week 11: Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>: Final Paper Presentations**

This week you will spend about 5 minutes giving an oral presentation of your final paper research. You will also need to email me a slide of the basic theories you explore and what empirical studies they relate to in relation to the class.

Home/work: Keep working on revising your final paper.