Cities and Representations

UEL_6_CAR

School of Law and Social Sciences

Level 6

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1. MODULE DETAILS

Module Title:	Cities and Representations
Module Level:	6
Module Reference Number:	UEL_6_CAR
Credit Value:	20 CAT points
Student Study Hours:	200
Contact Hours:	39
Private Study Hours:	161
Pre-requisite Learning (If applicable):	None
Co-requisite Modules (If applicable):	None
Course(s):	BA(Hons) Human Geography; BA(Hons) Urban and Environmental Planning
Year and Semester	2019/2020, Semester 2
Module Coordinator:	Dr Philip Pinch Dr Kevin Milburn
Contact Details (Email, Room)	pinchpl@lsbu.ac.uk
Subject Area:	Human Geography; Planning
Summary of Assessment Method:	Coursework, 4,000 word essay

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION

This module explores the ways in which the changing geographies of cities have been conceptualised and represented across a range of written and visual media through history. The implications of such representations for policy and practice, particularly for spatial planning, are a central theme of the module.

3. AIMS OF THE MODULE

The aim of this module is to enable students to understand current and historical ideas and representations about the functions, characteristics and issues facing 'modern' cities. Professional and academic urban analyses provide one source of such understanding. However, some of the strongest and most vivid ideas and images of the modern city comes from more direct and personal traditions of the literary and visual arts. This module engages in both traditions and aims to develop an ability to understand and relate such ideas to professional and technical forms of urban intervention.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

- Analyse processes of urban change and restructuring within contemporary cities and urban systems, and the challenges these present for urban policy, city governance and planning

- Evaluate academic attempts to conceptualize the character and functions of the modern city, in particular perspectives from outside professional planning practice to be found in the literary, oral and visual arts

- Identify, select and use investigative strategies and techniques to undertake a critical analysis of visual representations of city environments, evaluating the outcomes.

- Assess the relevance of visual representational methods for contemporary planning practice, in particular the ways it in which it seeks to communicate its aims and objectives to a wider public

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE MODULE

This module is 100% assessed by coursework. Students will write a 4,000 word essay which demonstrates a critical and reflective engagement with the themes raised by the module.

Choose one of the following essay titles:

1. Critically evaluate the ways in which the work and role of the planner in society has been depicted in film and documentary programmes. Use examples from different periods of time to illustrate your answer.

2. Choose one of the following spatial issues and evaluate the ways in which it has been represented in film, music or literature. What lessons might planners or geographers draw from such representations?

   - Life in affluent post-war suburbs
   - Life in urban ghettos and/or marginalised housing estates.
   - Spaces and processes of gentrification in the city
   - The policing, control and surveillance of life in cities
   - Cultural and ethnic divisions and tensions within cities

3. Visions of urban futures have been of central importance to planners and planning practice. What then can planners learn from cinematic portrayals of future urban utopias and dystopias?

4. Creative media review: How do artists (film makers, musicians and authors) shape the ways in which we imagine and understand the city? Choose one or two key 'texts' (which could be films, songs, books) that are focused on city life, or particular issues facing cities, and write a review of it/them from the perspective of the urban planner or urban geographer. The review must focus on how city life is portrayed and not be a simple summary of the plot or lyrics. Most importantly, you should attempt to draw out lessons for urban planning practice and/or critical geographical understandings of cities.

With all these essays you will need to draw upon examples that are focused on city life. Remember to be analytical in your approach and not provide a mere summary of the plot/lyrics/scripts. You can draw upon existing published reviews of the relevant examples if you want, but you must cite them and don't plagiarise. Try to be original and thought provoking.

This essay must be handed in through the Moodle VLE by Monday 11th May 2020. You can check our all these films on the Internet Movies Data Base website (http://www.imdb.com/ and the Sight and Sound website (http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/

This essay must be handed in through the Moodle VLE by **Monday 11th May 2020.**

Assessment Criteria

In marking essays tutors will be looking for:

- Depth of understanding of module themes and issues (20%)
- Evidence of engaging with academic literature (20%)
- Ability to apply relevant conceptual ideas and analytical frameworks illustrative film examples (30%)
- Structure and organisation of coursework (20%)
- Presentation, English & referencing (10%)

Please note that:

- The essay must be typed and written in your own words.
- Any material copied from a book or academic paper must be put in quotation marks and the sources acknowledged. Failure to do this may result in an offence for plagiarism.
- The full range of sources consulted should be included in a comprehensive list of books and journal articles at the end of the essay. Please give references in the Harvard format.

6.   FEEDBACK

We endeavour to provide written feedback on your essays within 15 working days through the Moodle VLE. A sample will be sent to an external examiner for evaluation and approval.

7.   INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE MODULE

7.1   Overview of the Main Content

Underpinning the module is the following point made in Watson and Bridge (2012): "… urban experience is integrally embedded and formed from our literary readings of the city - from the books and poetry we have read or the films and plays we have seen. We could even go so far as to argue that there is no understanding of the city that is not mediated by our literary and filmic imaginations." (pp.258-259).

Planning and communication theory: what do planners speak and write about, what means do they use and who can understand them? Contrasting understandings and representations of the problems and character of the Victorian city and capitalist 'modernity'. Sociology, the city and mentality. The garden city utopia and retreat from modernity? Literary representations of the city from the 19th Century. Planning and the modern city utopia. Cinematic representations of the 'modern city'. Representations of post-war urban planning and problems. Film noir and neo-noir: the city of light and dark. Portraying city and community in postmodern times: literary, academic and cinematic approaches.

7.2   Overview of Types of Classes

Lectures, seminar discussions and small group activities. The module is focused around a series of key-note lectures and seminars. Appropriate video presentations, linked to small group discussions, also form part of the learning programme.

7.3   Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

The anticipated teaching and learning will be achieved through the following indicative hours of activity:

- Lectures: 26
- Seminars and Workshops   13
- Total Contact hours: 39
- Reading to support lectures   80
- Preparation for Coursework   81

□ Student managed learning hours: 161
□ Total learning time: 200

7.4   Employability

This module provides students with the skills to reflect critically on our understandings of urban issues and the most effective means of communicating these to the public. This will empower their career prospects in areas such as urban regeneration and city planning; their skills and understanding being to relevant agencies across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

8.   THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Week	Lecture Topic	Tutor
1	Introduction: Visual methods, cities and planners. Planners on film.	PP
2	Representing the modern city: Modernism, the machine and the city	PP
3	Planners on film: Dreams of post-war reconstruction	PP
4	The planner's dream goes wrong? Triumph and tragedy and post-war planning	PP
5	Noir and Neo-noir in Los Angeles	KM
6	Domestic Bliss? Gender, Race and Sexuality in the post-war US Suburb: *All That Heaven Allows* (1955)	KM
7	Self Study Week	
8	'Drop Dead!' New York in the 1970s: *Taxi Driver* (1976)	KM
9	Race, space and gentrification in the American city: *Do the Right Thing* (1989)	KM
10	Future cities - planning and cinematic visions of modern and postmodern urbanisms	PP
Easter		
11	Module review and Essay Guidance	KM
12	Drop-in Essay Tutorials	KM
13	Essay submission date through Moodle on the **11th May**	

9.   STUDENT EVALUATION

This module has proved extremely popular with students for many years and it will continue to build upon past good practice. The tutors continue to draw upon the most recent academic work in this field and to constantly review the materials used to illustrate key ideas and concepts.

Detailed readings will be listed each week as part of the lectures so please make note of these in the PowerPoints posted on Moodle VLE.

10. LEARNING RESOURCES

10.1   Core Materials

AlSayyad, N (2007) *Cinematic Urbanism*, Routledge, London

Mennel, B (2008) *Cities and Cinema*, London: Routledge

Clarke, D. B (ed) (1997) *The Cinematic City*, Routledge, London

Morgan, J (2003) 'Investigating Visual Images', in *The Student's Companion to Geography*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, pp. 253-259.

Tewdwr-Jones, M (2011) *Urban Reflections: Narratives of Place, Planning and Change*, Policy Press, Cambridge

Tewdwr-Jones, M (2007) "Film, Space and Place Identity: Reflections on Urban Planning", *Planning Theory and Practice*, 8, 1, 108-112

Tewdwr-Jones, M (2005) 'Oh, the planners did their best': the planning films of John Betjeman', *Planning Perspectives*, 20, 389-411

Stevenson, D (2003) *Cities and Urban Cultures*, Open University Press, Maidenhead

Bridge, G and Watson, S (eds) (2011) *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, Blackwell, Oxford

Brunsden, C (2007) *London in Cinema: The Cinematic City Since 1945*, BFI, London

Hubbard, P. (2002) 'Screen shifting consumption, 'riskless rights' and the changing geographies of cinema'. *Environment and Planning A*, 34, 1239-1258. Pinder, D (2005) *Visions of the City*, Edinburgh University Press

Sandercock, L (2003) *Mongrel Cities: Cosmopolis II*, Continuum, London

Spicer A (2007) (ed) *European Film Noir*, Manchester University Press

Shiel, M and Fitzmaurice, T (eds) (2001) *Cinema and the City*, Blackwell, Oxford

Shiel, M and Fitzmaurice, T (eds) (2003) *Screening the City*, Verso, London

Beuka, R (2004) 'Introduction', in *SuburbiaNation: Reading Suburban Landscape in Twentieth-Century American Film and Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1–22.

Mulvey, L (1987) 'Notes on Sirk and Melodrama', in Gledhill, C. (ed.) *Home is Where the Heart is: Studies in Melodrama and the Woman's Film*. London: BFI, pp.75–79.

Corkin, S (2011) 'Introduction', in *Starring New York: Filming the Grime and the Glamour of the Long 1970s*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.1–20

Haenni, S (2010) 'Geographies of Desire: Postsocial Urban Space and Historical Revision in the Films of Martin Scorsese', *Journal of Film and Video*, vol.62, no.1–2, pp.67–85.

Pouzoulet, C (1997) 'The Cinema of Spike Lee: Images of a Mosaic City', in Reid, M. (ed.), *Spike Lee's Do The Right Thing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.31–49.

Webb, L (2014) 'New York City: Cinema and Crisis in the Entrepreneurial City', in *The Cinema of Urban Crisis: Seventies Film and the Reinvention of the City*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp.75–126

10.2   Optional Materials

http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/sep/09/gotham-new-york-what-do-comicstell-us-about-cities

Aitken, S and Zonn, L (eds) (1994) *Place, Power, Situation and spectacle: a Geography of Film*, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham.

Barker, S (2003) *Projected Cities: Cinema and Urban Space*, Reaktion Books, LondonBenton, M. (1995) "Will the real/reel Los Angeles stand up please?" *Urban Geography*, 16, 144164.

Bogle, D (1989) *Toms, coons, mulattoes, mammies, and bucks: an interpretive history of blacks in American films*, Continuum, New York

Borde, R. and Chaumeton, E. (2005) "Towards a Definition Film Noir" in A Silver & J Ursini (eds) *Film Noir Reader*, Limelight Editions, New York.

Copjec, J (1993) (ed) *Shades of Noir: A Reader*, London; New York: Verso

da Costa, M (2003) 'Cinematic cities Researching films as geographical texts' in Ogborn, M *et al* (eds) *Cultural Geography in Practice*, Hodder and Stoughton, London

Dimendberg, E (2004) *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity,* Harvard University Press, Harvard.

Fishman, R (1996) 'Urban Utopias: Ebenezer Howard and Le Corbusier' in Campbell, S and Fainstein, S (eds) *Readings in Planning Theory*, Blackwell, Oxford

Fishman, R (1977) *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*, MIT Press, Cambridge

Krutnik, F (2001) "Something more than night" in Clarke, D (ed) *The Cinematic City,* Routledge, London.

Mazierska, E and Rascaroli, L (eds) (2003) *From Moscow to Madrid: postmodern Cities, European Cinema* Tauris, London.

Hall, P (1992) *Urban and Regional Planning (3rd edition)*, Routledge, London

Hall, P (1989) *Cities of Tomorrow*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford

Kerman, J.B (ed) (1997) 'Retrofitting Bladerunner: Issues' *in Ridley Scott's Balderunner and Philip K Dick's Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?(2nd Edition)*, Bowling Green State University Press, Ohio

Leary, M.E. (2009) "Seeing the Invisible Noir: Dirty Pretty Things", *Street Signs*, Spring, pp. 42-43, available online: academia.edu/1232137/Seeing_the_Invisible_Noir_Dirty_Pretty_Things

LeGates, R.T and Stout, F (eds) (2011) *The City Reader (5th edition)*, Routledge, London

Pile, S., Brook, C and Mooney, G (eds) (1999) *Unruly Cities?,* Routledge, London

Raban, J (1974) *Soft City*, Hamish Hamiliton

Robson, E (2005) *Film Noir*, London: Virgin Film

Sandercock, L (2008) "Interface: Multimedia and Planning", *Planning Theory and Practice*, 8, 1, 89-1148

Schon, N (2001) *The Chosen City*, Spon Press, London

Spicer A (2002) *Film Noir*, Longman, Harlow

Watkins, S.C (1998) *Representing: Hip Hop Culture and the Production of Black Cinema*, University of Chicago Press

NOTES

Some Useful Websites

- Make sure you look at the 'Film and Sound On Line' library of films and documentary clips. You can access this via the library internet site:
  http://lispac.lsbu.ac.uk/record=e1000058

- British Film Institute (which has loads of other Links):
  http://www.bfi.org.uk/

- The Internet Movies Data Base: http://www.imdb.com/

- http://movies.go.com/

- http://www.citylab.com/