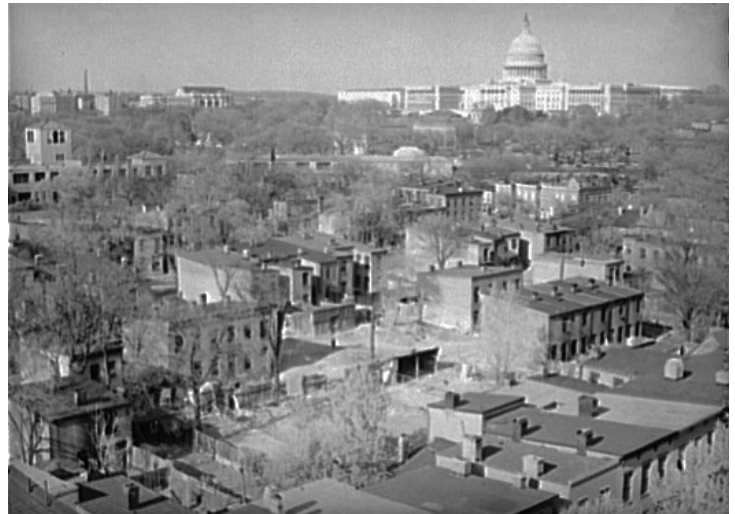


Skidmore College
AM352 City in American Culture: DC

Prof. Amber N. Wiley
Spring 2017
WF 12:20-1:40 PM
TISCH 308
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Office: TISCH 329
Hours: Thursday 9:30-11:00A



“Washington is a city of Southern efficiency and Northern charm.”
John F. Kennedy

This course is an examination of the growth and impact of urban life on American culture. The course examines the relationship between the perceptions of urban life and the actualities of that experience. By focusing on how varying reactions to the urban experience result from economic, ethnic, or gender differences, the course explores such topics as: the effect of industrialization, the waves of rural migration and overseas immigration, the concentrations of wealth and poverty, the impact of architecture, and the parks and planning movements. *The nation's capital, Washington, D.C., will be the lens through which we investigate these issues.* **The central theme to this urban investigation is Washington: Symbol and City.**

The course is interdisciplinary in nature: our investigation into the city of Washington, D.C. will include methods and theory from anthropology, art history, architecture, geography, history, landscape studies, and planning. We will use both primary and secondary sources to gain an understanding of the city over time; the course readings will be coupled with representations of the city in various media – art, film, music, novels, and poetry. Students should be willing to complete the reading, think deeply about the themes covered, and come prepared to participate in class.

LEARNING GOALS

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Engage in critical discourse about the city as it relates to society, race, culture, politics, and other structural frameworks affecting everyday life
- Act as cultural critics in the areas of urban history, and city planning
- Identify the historical roots of major contemporary issues confronting American urban society
- Understand how to set a research agenda driven by an investigative problem or question
- Produce an independent research project on an aspect of the city of Washington, D.C. and analyze its contemporary significance

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Carl Abbott, *Political Terrain: Washington, D.C. From Tidewater Town to Global Metropolis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999)
- Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009)

GRADING

Attendance and Participation	(15%)
Etymological Analysis	(15%)
Map Production + Analysis	(20%)
Film Analysis	(25%)
Final Paper	(25%)

ATTENDANCE

Your success in this course depends entirely on your attendance, participation, reading, and completion of course assignments. This lecture course meets twice a week and attendance is mandatory. Special circumstances such as excused absences are the exception. These include illness, religious holiday, or a personal/family crisis that is documented by an academic administrator. Please notify me in advance if you expect to be absent. You are allowed two unexcused absences; absences after that are detrimental to your class grade. Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% lowering of the final grade in this course. Timeliness is paramount, class meetings are 80m, and tardiness can cause you to miss important class announcements and information in lecture.

PARTICIPATION

Participation includes contributing to in-class discussions by speaking, being intellectually present and engaged for each meeting, paying attention to what is said by your peers, and being an active learner and listener. In order to make meaningful contributions to class discussions your participation should reflect your engagement with, and understanding of, the assigned course readings. Students should therefore have the texts read prior to the date on which it first appears on the syllabus. Not participating in lectures and classroom discussions will result in a lower class grade. Laptops will not be permitted in class unless for a documented learning accommodation, or for in-class workshop.

Mutual respect. Each person in this course has unique prior experiences and a unique viewpoint to share. This offers a great opportunity for us to learn from each other. Though disagreement and even conflict may occur, I expect your cooperation in maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect. When participating in discussions, it is perfectly acceptable to have strong opinions – in fact I encourage you to do so. In the process, however, I expect you to respect the basic intelligence and humanity of each of the other participants in the discussion. Disagreement is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as there is a commitment to mutual respect. Hateful and demeaning speech will not be tolerated.

BLACKBOARD

Some of our course material will be available through our course Blackboard site: <https://learn.skidmore.edu/>. From Blackboard, you will be able to download articles; review the syllabus and assignments; submit assignments; and check your grades. Articles available on Blackboard are labeled with (Bb).

SOCIAL EXPLORER

The course depends on Social Explorer as a source about the United States, its regions, and its cities. Demographic information about the United States is available for online research, dating from 1790 to present day estimates. Skidmore has an institutional subscription so if you log on while on campus you can create an account and access it for 3 months before having to log on while on campus again. You should save your projects in an account created with your Skidmore email. Visit www.socialexplorer.com.

ASSIGNMENTS

The essay assignment material will be covered both in class lectures and assigned readings. It will be necessary to attend all lectures and read all assigned material in order to be prepared for these assignments. Please follow the Chicago Style for citations. Skidmore's guide to writing can be found here: https://www.skidmore.edu/writing_guide/. Full credit will not be given to papers that do not meet minimum length requirements. There will be no extension granted on the essay due date, except for a legitimately documented excused absence. You will receive a 1/3 reduction in your grade for each day that exceeds the stated submission deadline, meaning, an A will become an A- after one day, a B+ after two days, a B after three days, etc.

GRADE SCALE

A (Excellent): Exceptional performance, exceeding the requirements of the course, showing strong academic initiative and independent resourcefulness.

B (Good): Performance above the norm; accurate and complete; beyond the minimum requirements of the course; work demonstrates marked progress and initiative.

C (Average): Satisfactory work that adequately meets minimum requirements and demonstrates satisfactory comprehension, communication skills, and effort; demonstrates little initiative to investigate the problem without substantial prodding of the instructor; work shows little improvement.

D (Inferior): Unsatisfactorily meets minimum requirements; demonstrates minimum comprehension, communication skills, and effort at an inferior level; initiative lacking; improvement not noticeable.

F (Failing): Does not meet minimum requirements; fails to adequately demonstrate comprehension, communication skills, and effort.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The integrity of Skidmore Honor System is based on the absolute honesty of the entire community in all academic endeavors. As part of the community, students have responsibilities regarding the originality of all independent work that forms the basis for the evaluation of their academic achievement. For more information see the Honor Code: <https://www.skidmore.edu/advising/integrity/>. Students should be familiar with the College's Honor Code and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. Please pay particular attention to Skidmore's policies on documentation and plagiarism; you may also find it helpful to refer to the Definitions and Guidelines document published on-line through the Office of Academic Advising (OAA). Violating Skidmore's policies on academic honor can lead to course failure, suspension, and even expulsion. Examples of a violation of academic honor include, but are not limited to: submission of the same written work in more than one course; plagiarism – the use of someone else's words, ideas, information, or original material without acknowledging the source. If you are unclear about how to cite sources in your papers, you should ask. I have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism – plagiarizing sources will result in a failing grade for an assignment.

DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Student Academic Services at 518.580.8150 to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <https://www.skidmore.edu/accessibility/>.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center assists students in addressing academic, career, and personal problems. Support services include: adjustment to college, depression, family problems, anxiety, sexual assault and eating disorders, or other situations that may arise. Call 518.580.5555 or visit: <https://www.skidmore.edu/counseling/>.

MISCELLANEA

I reserve the right to make changes to the readings and assignments as the semester moves along, but will stay within the boundaries of the workload signaled in this syllabus. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours, except on weekends and holidays, and I do not check email after 5pm.

RELATED SKIDMORE PROGRAMS

January 31	Walking Pattern: A Brief History of Labyrinths	@ The Tang	7 pm
February 1	Walk the Pattern	@ Wilson Chapel	6-9 pm
February 9	Screening: Jordan: Home Away from Home	@ Case Center SPA	6 pm
February 13	Screening: Después De Trujillo	@ Davis Auditorium	6 pm
February 21	Bringing the Past into the Future	@ TBD	7 pm
March 21	Screening: The Settlers	@ Emerson Auditorium	6pm

Week 1 Introduction

01.25.17

- Please spend some time tonight familiarizing yourself with the online course space on Blackboard. Review the syllabus, make sure you can access and print the articles for next class.
- Read for Friday, January 27.

01.27.17

- George Lipsitz, "What is American Studies?" American Studies Association White Papers (2015) (Bb)
 - Richard Bello and Frances Brandau-Brown, "City as Message: A Case Study of Visual Persuasion in Washington, D.C.," *International Journal of the Arts in Society* 5 no. 5 (2011): 315-322 (Bb)
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Week 2 What is Washington?

02.01.17

- Abbott, xii-xv, 1-25

02.03.17

- Savage, 1-22
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Week 3 Planning the National Capitol

02.08.17

- Abbott, 26-52

02.10.17

Trip to the GIS Center for Interdisciplinary Research

- Jeffrey F. Meyer, "The Eagle and the Dragon: Comparing the Designs of Washington and Beijing," *Washington History* 8 no. 2 (Fall/Winter 1996/1997): 4-21 (Bb)

Due: Etymological Analysis

Week 4 District of Contradictions

02.15.17

- Savage, 25-60

02.17.17

- Abbott, 57-92
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Week 5 The Secret City

02.22.17

- John Edward Hasse, "Washington's Duke Ellington," *Washington History* 26 (Spring 2014): 36-59 (Bb)

02.24.17

- Spencer R. Crew, "Melding the Old and the New: The Modern African American Community, 1930-1960," *Urban Odyssey: A Multicultural History of Washington, D.C.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996) Francine Curro Cary, ed. (Bb)
-

Week 6 Washington Goes to War or, How Do We Create an Economy?

03.01.17

- Abbott, 99-131

03.03.17

- Frank Krutnik, "Critical Accommodations: Washington, Hollywood, and the World War II Housing Shortage," *Journal of American Culture* 30 no. 4 (December 2007): 417-433 (Bb)

Due: Maps

Week 7 Public Space and "The Public"

03.08.17

- Savage 147-170

03.10.17

- Savage, 171-192

Week 8 Spring Break

03.15.17 NO CLASS

03.17.17 NO CLASS

Week 9 Chocolate City

03.22.17

- Dana Lanier Schaffer, "The 1968 Washington Riots in History and Memory," *Washington History* 15 no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2003/2004): 4-33 (Bb)

03.24.17

- Kip Lornell, "Chuck Brown (1936-2012)," *Washington History* 24 no. 2 (2012): 156-158 (Bb)

- Amber N. Wiley, "A Model School for a Model City: Shaw Junior High School as a Monument to Planning Reform," *Designing Schools: Space, Place and Pedagogy* (Routledge, 2017) Julie Willis and Kate Darian-Smith, eds. (Bb)

Film: Adjust Your Color: The Truth of Petey Greene

Week 10 Power to the People?

03.29.17

- C. Meriwether, "Washington City Government," *Political Science Quarterly* 12 no. 3 (September 1897): 407-419 (Bb)

- "Political Evolution of the Seat of the Federal Government," *Congressional Digest* 57 October 1978; 226-228 (Bb)

03.31.17

- Catherine Maddison, "'In Chains 400 Years – And Still in Chains in DC!' The 1966 Free DC Movement and the Challenges of Organizing in the City," *Journal of American Studies* 41 no. 1 (2007): 169–192 (Bb)

Film: The Nine Lives of Marion Barry

Week 11 Washington Sports

04.05.17

- Ryan A. Swanson, "Less Than Monumental: The Sad History of Sports Venues in Washington, DC," *DC Sports: The Nation's Capital at Play* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2015) Chris Elzey and David K. Wiggins, eds. (Bb)

04.07.17

- Stephen H. Norwood, "George Allen, Richard Nixon, and the Washington Redskins: The Drive to Win in an Era of Stalemate," *DC Sports: The Nation's Capital at Play* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2015) Chris Elzey and David K. Wiggins, eds. (Bb)

Film: Without Bias

Week 12 The Conscience of the Nation

04.12.17

- Savage, 251-270

- Maya Lin, "Vietnam Veterans Memorial," *Boundaries* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000,): 2:03-4:23 (Bb)

04.14.17

- Savage, 284-295

- Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, "Understanding the Holocaust through the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum," *Journal of Architectural Education* 48 no. 4 (May 1995): 240-249 (Bb)

Week 13 The Global City

04.19.17

- Abbott, 133-156

04.21.17

- Audrey Singer, "Metropolitan Washington: A New Immigrant Gateway," *Research in Race and Ethnic Relations* 17 Hispanic Migration and Urban Development: Studies from Washington DC, Enrique Pumar, ed. (Bb)

Film: Salad Days: A Decade of Punk in Washington, DC (1980-90) & The Legend of Cool Disco Dan

Week 14 Conclusion

04.26.17

- Eve Bratman, "Development's Paradox: Is Washington DC a Third World City? *Third World Quarterly* 32 no. 9 (2011): 1541-1556 (Bb)

Film: Ballou

04.28.17

- Conclusion

05.08.17 Final Paper Due