A Sense of Place

Semester and Year  
SP 2017

Course Number  
IDSEM-UG1781

Section  
1

Instructor  
Steve Hutkins

Days  
Fridays

Time  
12:30 – 3:15

Units  
2

Level  
U

Foundation Requirement  
HUM

Notes & Restrictions

Course meets during the first seven weeks only, Jan. 27 – March 10

Course Description

This course examines the places in which we work and play, travel and dwell—the office tower and the suburban house, the city street and the superhighway, the small town and the megalopolis, the shopping mall and the theme park, the American road and foreign places. Synthesizing insights from literary works and fields like cultural geography, landscape studies, and architectural history, we explore such questions as: What gives a place its particular feel or character? How do our values and worldview affect the way we experience places, and what constitutes that experience? How do places—and the way they are represented in literature and other media—shape our attitudes and behavior? What gives a place “quality,” and how can we design and build better places? Readings may include J. B. Jackson’s *Landscape in Sight*, Yi-Fu Tuan’s *Space and Place*, James Kunstler’s *The Geography of Nowhere*, and D. J. Waldie’s *Holy Land*.

Readings

The assigned readings are available online.
Requirements

1. Twelve blog posts (about 500-600 words each) (70%)
2. Twelve comments on other posts (100 words) (10%)
3. In class: participation, attendance, etc. (20% of final grade)

(No Incomplete grades.)

Assignments

(for details, see the Assignments page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS</th>
<th>POST TAG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: The Experience of Place, The Spirit of Place</td>
<td>1. Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essays by Hiss, Tuan, etc.</td>
<td>2. Spirit</td>
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<td>Essays by Lippard, Durrell, etc.</td>
<td>3. Social life</td>
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<td>Week 2: People in places</td>
<td>4. Orientation</td>
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<td>Whyte, The Social Life of Small Urban Places</td>
<td>5. Utopias</td>
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<td>Lynch, The Image of the City</td>
<td>6. Architecture</td>
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<td>Week 3: Utopian Visions</td>
<td>7. Suburbia</td>
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<td>Jacobs, Death and Life of Great American Cities</td>
<td>8. Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings on modern and postmodern architecture</td>
<td>9. Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4: Vernacular and Placelessness</td>
<td>10. Placelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kunstler, The Geography of Nowhere</td>
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Policies

Deadlines

The blog posts are due on Mondays and Thursdays. The comments on other people’s posts can be done a day or two later. (These are important deadlines, and the website makes it easy to track them.)

Plagiarism

In writing your posts, you are encouraged to copy and paste quotations from scholarly articles and other websites, but it is extremely important that you cite your source (author or title) and provide a link to it. The blog posts are a form of academic writing, and plagiarism is a serious violation of the rules of academic integrity.

Attendance

The class is a discussion seminar and meets only seven times, so attendance is very important and part of the final grade. If you miss a class, you can partly make it up by doing a few extra comments.

Contact

Office: 1 Washington Place, room 608
Phone: 212-998-7361
E-mail: ssh1@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Fridays, 11-12:30; 3:15 – 4:00; appointments recommended.