

Race and Capitalism in American Cities
Yale University Summer Session B(July 2 - August 3)
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 pm-4:15 pm

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Office Hours:
By appointment



Photo by Mel Rosenthal/Museum of the City of New York¹

This course is an introduction into the various ways in which race and capitalism, our dominant economic system, have shaped the history of American cities. It asks, how has the production of racial difference enabled the production of wealth? And subsequently, how have cities become the products of this dynamic process? Through interdisciplinary methods that bring together american studies, architecture, history, sociology, political science, and geography, this course explores how the political economies of

¹<https://untappedcities.com/2016/05/26/in-the-south-bronx-of-america-1970s-mel-roenthal-photos-at-mcny-show-another-side-of-borough/>

American cities are interwoven with racial ideology. The first two weeks of the course explore the foundations of race and capitalism in metropolitan spaces by emphasizing the theories of race and capital. The next three weeks ground students in the historical processes that diverse cities have experienced in relation to race and capital including industrialization and deindustrialization, employment and housing, and private efforts by actors across the color line who sought sustenance and/or achieve wealth. In addition to a midterm, students will engage in a field project as a final assignment that will serve as the culminating point of the course which will enable students to apply, test, and refine their findings.

Required Texts:

Thomas Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*
Supplemental readings are available on Canvas*

Course Requirements and Expectations

Attendance and participation: Given the brevity of the session, students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students must come to class with the readings completed and ready to engage fellow classmates in discussion. Course instructor will monitor your attendance and participation and grade accordingly.

Written work: There are three assignments in this class: a short source-analysis presentation, a four-page annotated bibliography that will serve as the midterm exam, and a field project that will serve as the final exam. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Research and writing expectations will be discussed in class. Students must hand in all assignments on time and complete all assignments to pass the course. If a major and unforeseeable emergency prevents an individual from submitting a project on time, the student is required to make arrangements with the course instructor and their residential college dean. Extensions are not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Source Analysis: Students will choose a primary document to analyze in particular detail and compose a 2-page summary focusing on its historical significance which will be presented to the class during Week 2 of the course. This descriptive and interpretive analysis is intended to introduce students to sources that they may use for their final project.

Annotated bibliography: Given the historical breadth covered in this course, students will be required to meet with course instructor no later than Tuesday of Week Four to discuss a theme or topic for their final project. Based on this conversation, students will prepare a 4-page annotated bibliography, including major secondary works, that will serve them for the final, but also beyond the classroom for future work that they may want to conduct on that topic. Given the brevity of the course, students will not be expected to have read each work on the bibliography in its entirety. Instead, annotations should focus on assessing the work's contribution to the field. The process and methods for this assignment will be discussed and practiced at length in the course.

Final project: This 5-7-page final project will consider the landscapes of race and capitalism and will require students to focus on one building as the sole unit of analysis. Students will then analyze how race and capitalism intersect in relationship to their chosen building or structure. They are required to include a minimum of two primary sources (maps, newspapers, etc.) and other secondary sources, including those that we have covered in class. This final project aims to distill abstract ideas of race and economy and articulate them using concrete spaces which are often characterized by the paradoxes, tensions, and dialectics that shape the everyday world.

Grading:

Attendance and Participation	20 percent
Source analysis Presentations	25 percent
Annotated Bibliography Midterm	25 percent
Final Project	30 percent
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Total:	100 percent

Schedule:

WEEK ONE

Tuesday July 3rd: Course Introduction and Racial Capitalism

- Readings:

- Robert Heilbroner, “The Drive to Amass Capital,” and “Karl Marx”
- David Harvey, “The Urban Process Under Capitalism”*
- Walter Johnson, “To Remake the World: Slavery, Racial, Capitalism, and Justice” in *Race Capitalism and Justice*, Boston Review*
- Cedric Robinson, “Racial Capitalism: The Nonobjective Character of Capitalist Development” in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition**

Thursday July 5th: Slavery, Cities, and the Making of American Capitalism

- Readings:
 - Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*- Introduction & Chapter One.
 - Barbara Jeanne Fields, “Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the United States of America.”
- *Primary Source activity*
- Visit to Sterling Memorial Library: Introduction to Yale library system
 - *SIGN UP FOR SOURCE PRESENTATIONS*

WEEK TWO

Tuesday July 10th: Urban Industrial Life

- Readings
 - Lizabeth Cohen, “Living and Working in Chicago in 1919,” in *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*
 - Tom Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, Chapter 1
 - Davarian Baldwin, “Mapping the Black Metropolis: A Cultural Geography of the Stroll,” in *Chicago’s New Negroes: Modernity, The Great Migration, and Black Urban Life*
- *SOURCE ANALYSIS PRESENTATION*

Thursday July 12: Empire & Migration

- Readings:
 - Peter James Hudson, “Dark Finance” and “Colonialism’s Methods” in *Bankers and Empire: How Wall Street Colonized the Caribbean*.
 - Mgae Ngai, “Braceros, ‘Wetback,’ and the National Boundaries of Class.”
 - Maria Quintana, “Contracting Freedom: Race, Empire, and U.S. Labor Importation Programs, 1942-1964”
- *SOURCE ANALYSIS PRESENTATION*

WEEK THREE

Tuesday July 17th: Capital Crisis: Deindustrialization & Decentralization

- Readings
 - Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, Chapters. 5 and 6
 - Andrew Needham, “Integrating Geographies,” in *Power Lines; Phoenix and the Making of the Modern Southwest*.
 - Jefferson Cowie and Nick Salvatore, “The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the

New Deal in American History.”

- *Primary Source Analysis*

Thursday July 19th: Public Segregation & Profit

- Readings
 - Kenneth Jackson, “Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream” in *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*
 - Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, Chs. 2 and 3
 - Dorothy Roberts, “Introduction,” *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women’s Struggles against Urban Inequality* (Oxford, 2004) [*Yale e-Book]
- *Redlining Map Group Exercise*
 - Destin Jenkins, “Who Segregated America.” From <http://www.publicbooks.org/who-segregated-america/>

WEEK FOUR

Tuesday July 24th: Real Estate & Urban Austerity

- Readings
 - NDB Connolly, “Introduction,” “Bargaining and Hoping,” “Pan-America” in *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow in South Florida*
 - Kim Phillips-Fein, “Introduction,” and “Big Mac,” in *Fear City: New York’s Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*
- *Primary Source Analysis*
- *ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE*

Thursday July 26th: Social “Decline” & “Disorder”

- Screening:
 - *Los Sures* documentary.
- Readings
 - George L. Kelling & James Q. Wilson, “Broken Windows: The police and neighborhood safety,” in *The Atlantic*: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>
 - Christina B. Hanhardt, “Broken Windows at Blue’s: A Queer History of Gentrification and Policing,” in *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*
 - Terry Williams, “Introduction,” in *The Cocaine Kids: The Inside Story of a Teenage Drug Ring*

WEEK FIVE

Tuesday July 31st: Whose City?

- Readings
 - Sharon Zukin, “Whose Culture? Whose City?” in *The Cultures of Cities*.
 - Suleiman Osman, “Gentrification in the United States,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*: <http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-135>
 - Don Mitchell, “The Annihilation of Space by Law: Anti-Homeless Laws and the Shrinking Landscape of Rights,” in *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*
 - Julie Sze, “The Racial Geography of New York City Garbage: Local and Global Trash

- Politics,” *Noxious New York: The Racial Politics of Urban Environmental Justice*
- *Primary Source analysis*
 - Branding Commercials*

Thursday, August 2nd: New Haven and the American City

- Readings
 - Gabrielle Brainard, “Party Walls: Understanding Urban Change Through a Block of New Haven Row Houses, 1870-1979,” *Journal of the New Haven Colony Historical Society*
- *Field Trip*

**** Final Project Due August 9th by 11:59 pm. ****

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course. Students should become familiar with University-wide policies. For a definition of plagiarism, see <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism>. For information on the proper way to cite sources: <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism>. If you are in doubt about the proper citation of sources and/or need help with any part of the writing process, I encourage you to get in touch with me and/or the trained staff at the writing center: <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing>