

Oakland University
College of Arts and Sciences
M.A. in Liberal Studies Program

Liberal Studies 500: Core Colloquium: the CITY in Literature, History, Art & Film
Winter 2005

Instructor: Prof. N. Cole
Office: 221 Varner Hall
Class Time: 6:30-9:00 p.m.

E-mail: cole@oakland.edu
Office phone: (248) 270-2539
Office hours: M TH 4:00-6:00 p.m.

*“If we would lay a new foundation for urban life, we must understand the historic nature of the city, and distinguish between its original functions, those that have emerged from it, and those that may still be called forth.” [Lewis Mumford, *The City in History*]*

“. . . the cinema belongs to the city . . . it did not precede it, nor will it survive it. More than a form of solidarity – a common fate.” [Serge Daney, “Ville-Cine et Tele-Banlieue”]

“In rapid succession we passed through the fringe of fashionable London, hotel London, theatrical London, literary London, commercial London, and finally, maritime London, till we came to a riverside city of a hundred thousand souls . . . [Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Six Napoleons”]

Course Description: Introduction to liberal studies through the topic of the city in literature, history, art and film. Acquaints students with graduate level-skills, methods and materials, especially interdisciplinary research, oral presentations and writing.

Course Goals: 1. To study and explore representations of the city in history, literature, travel essays, art, cinema studies, journalism, music, and urban sociology;
2. To experience the city in new ways as we read about cities, travel to them (whether Detroit, London, or other cities), and write about them;
3. To demonstrate familiarity with research methods in at least two disciplines in preparing class presentations and final papers;
4. To discuss ideas openly and vigorously with each other in class;
5. To complete a series of writing assignments which show a mastery of important concepts, good writing skills, and allow for creative and thoughtful reflection on course material. These assignments will form a portfolio students will turn in at the end of LBS 500.

TEXTS: Boyle, Kevin *Arc of Justice*
(Cole, N. ed.) Coursepack (buy at Textbook Outlet)
Clarke, David *The Cinematic City*
Dickens, Charles *Oliver Twist* (Oxford U. Press,
Doyle, A.C. *Sherlock Holmes Mysteries* (Signet, 1984)
Hersey, John *Algiers Motel Incident*

Mumford, Lewis	<i>The City in History</i>
Poremba, David	<i>Detroit: a Motor City History</i>
Welsh, Alexander	<i>The City in Dickens</i>
Wilson, Jason	<i>Best American Travel Writing 2004</i>

Grading:	Short paper & travel essay	
	(15% each)	= 30%
	2 oral presentations	= 25%
	3 journal entries (5%)	=15%
	1 final paper	=25%
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	8 assignments	100 %
	*must complete all assignments	

Reading Schedule
(Subject to change,so stay alert)

Jan. 10

Introduction to Course:

Framing the questions in Liberal Studies cores
 In the Beginning: the Biblical City
 City poems: Alfred Corn "Fifty-Seventh Street and Fifth"
 William Blake "London"
 City art: (19th C. London)
 Hogarth: "Gin Lane"
 Dore: "Ludgate Hill"
 Fildes "Applicants for Admission to a
 Casual Ward"
 Tissot "London Visitors," "On the Thames"
 City essays:Excerpts:
 London: H.V. Morton: *In Search of London*
 Paris: Edmund White: *The Flaneur: A Stroll through the
 Paradoxes of Paris*
 Rome: Paul Hoffman: *The Seasons of Rome*
 New York: Colson Whitehead: *The Colossus of New York*
 If time: clips on the City in film

Jan. 17 Martin Luther King Holiday: Class not held today

Jan. 22 Groundwork: the City

Mumford: pp.1-93;153-182;205-242
 Coursepack: "The City" Art, Space and the City
 Doyle: "Adventure of the Six Napoleons"
 "Scandal in Bohemia"

***DUE: Journal entry #1**
Student Presentations:

Jan. 31 Dickensian London

Dickens: *Oliver Twist* [1837-8](chs.1-29)
 Welsh: ch. 2 "The City as Problem"
 Dickens: "Night Walks" [1860](Coursepack)
Student Presentations:

Feb.7

Dickens: *Oliver Twist* (chs.30-53)
 Schwarzbach, "*Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, and Nicholas Nickleby: Labyrinthine London*"
 Dickens: "Travelling Abroad" [1860](Coursepack)
***DUE: Journal entry #2**
Student Presentations:

Feb.15(Tuesday) Our City's History

Meet at Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection

David Poremba: *Detroit: Motor City History*

Guest speaker, Mr. Poremba, Curator of the Burton Collection

Feb. 21 Catching Up Class: Miscellanies

Feb.28 Defining Moments: 1960's

John Hersey: *The Algiers Motel Incident*

Michael Harper: "A Mother Speaks: the Algiers Motel Incident" (Coursepack)

Student Presentations

Winter Break

***** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE: WE MEET ON WED. NOT MONDAY**

March 16 just this week, Guest speaker

Kevin Boyle: *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights and Murder in The Jazz Age (National Book Award Winner, 2004)* 7 p.m., followed by visit to our class. Check with me for location.

- *Journal entry #3 due*

Mar 21 Global Cities

M.North: "The Public as Sculpture: from Heavenly City to Mass Ornament"

Richard Bak: "The Story of Ethnic Detroit" *Detroit Hour Magazine*(Coursepack)

Malcolm Miles: "The Monument" *Art, Space and the City* (Coursepack)

H.V. Morton: "I go to London Bridge early in the morning" (Coursepack)

Paul Salopek: "Shattered Sudan" *Best American Travel Writing*"260-74

Michael Byers: "Monuments to Our Better Nature," *Best American Travel Writing*, 17-21

Due: Travel Essay

Student Presentations:

Mar. 28 The Cinematic City: Dystopia**Read before class:**

Clarke: "Previewing the Cinematic City" (1-40)

Dessner: "Race, Space and Class: the Politics of Cityscape in Science-Fiction Films" (Coursepack)

View in class: Fritz Lang's 1926 *Metropolis*

Student Presentations:

April 2 Saturday FIELD TRIP Detroit Industry Frescoes by Diego Rivera (Detroit Institute of Arts) and Robert Graham's "Memorial to Joe Louis" sculpture, Joe Louis Arena. Guest lecturer: Bob Bradley. Students meet at 10 a.m. at the Frescoes.

Apr. 4 The Utopian City in Film

View at home: *Manhattan* (1979)

Read before class: Patricia Kruth: "The Color of New York: Places and Spaces in the Films of Martin Scorsese and Woody Allen" (Coursepack)

***Revision due: Polished, revised Travel Essay**

Apr. 11 The Foreign City in Film

View at home *Blade Runner* (1982)

Student Presentations:

***DUE: Short essay on city in film**

Apr.18 In-class workshop on papers

Apr.25 Final Exam Period: Final papers due and class meets so each student can present his/her abstract of final paper to the class and turn in paper