

Course Syllabus

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A6815: Public Space: Rhetorics of the Pedestrian



"The long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how panoptic they may be..." Michel de Certeau, 1984.

"Public space" is among the most widely used tropes in the spatial disciplines and it shapes discussions about control, freedom, status, and identity in the spaces of the city – indoor and out, and in the suburb, territory, or region. The term suffuses our drawings, images, and propositions yet typically remains abstract. For the term to be helpful, we must ask harder questions: How is public space experienced and regulated? How is public space entangled with the processes and discourses of urbanization? Are there multiple publics and different kinds of public spaces?

To refine an examination of public space, this seminar focuses on the pedestrian, the walker in the city and the prime user of public space. Yet the pedestrian is not a generic category: pedestrians are shoppers, workers,

tourists, vendors, residents, demonstrators, or homeless, of different races, classes and origins, of different capacities and with different expectations. None have the same access to, or status in, public space. How do pedestrianized spaces evidence these differences? How are forms of power or authority articulated in particular spaces?

Once a thorn in the side of traffic planners and city engineers who widened streets and narrowed sidewalks, the pedestrian has become central to "best practices" in remaking urban spaces. Regulations are being re-written, sidewalks adjusted, streets torn up, and street management expanded. But these are not isolated policies or actions since pedestrianization is has become a central feature in the monetizing of urban space, where every inch of the city is represented as a site of profit. How do pedestrian spaces and policies demonstrate or respond to this shift?

And, per de Certeau, the walker in the city carries political and counter-cultural meanings, standing in for the capacity of citizens (and non-citizens) to evade or protest control by urban or state institutions. The pedestrian might be a redemptive figure. Pedestrians, and the process of pedestrianization, reveals how cities are places – sometimes contested – of stability and instability. Thus, in this seminar, we will document how pedestrian spaces have been regulated, designed, planned, maintained, surveilled, policed, represented, perceived, and used, perhaps offering a glimpse of how power operates in cities.

01/21 Week 1: Introduction: The Politics of Pedestrianization

01/28 Week 2: Livability & Walkability

Jan Gehl, [*Life Between Buildings*](#):  *Using Public Space* [1971] (NY: 1987) 9-28.

Maroš Krivý & Leonard Ma, "[The Limits of the Livable City](#)" : From Homo Sapiens to Homo Cappuccino," *The Avery Review* 30 (March, 2018) 1-10.

Jane [Jacobs](#) , *The Death & Life of Great American Cities* (1961) excerpts.

Kim Dovey & Elek Pafka, "What is [Walkability](#)" ? The Urban DMA," *Urban Studies* 57: 1 (2020) 93-108.

Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (2001)

Brian [Tochterman](#) , "Theorizing Neoliberal Urban Development: A Genealogy from Richard Florida to Jane Jacobs," *Radical History Review* 112 (2012) 65–87.

02/04 Week 3: Complete & Incomplete Streets

"Streets," [Urban Street Design Guide](#)  (National Association of City Transportation Officials, 2013) 1-30.

Lusi Morhayim, "[Fixing the City](#)  in the Context of Neoliberalism: Institutionalized DIY," in Stephen Zavestoski & Julian Agyeman, eds., *Incomplete Streets: Processes, Practices, & Possibilities* (2015) 225-241.

Interboro Architects, *The Arsenal of Exclusion and Inclusion* (Actar, 2017).

John Allen, "Ambient Power: [Berlin's Potsdamer Platz](#)  and the Seductive Logic of Public Spaces," *Urban Studies* 43: 2 (February, 2006) 441–455.

Karina Landman, "[Gating the streets](#) : The Changing Shape of Public Spaces in South Africa" in A. Mananipour, ed., *Whose Public Space? International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development* (2010) 131-47.

02/11 Week 4: Publicness: Utility and Utilitarian (UD Beira trip)

Matthew Carmona, "[Contemporary Public Space](#) : Critique and Classification, Part One: Critique," *Journal of Urban Design* 15: 1 (February, 2010) 123–148.

Burcu Yigit Turan, "[Occupy Gezi Park](#) : The Never-Ending Search for Democracy, Public Space, and Alternative City-Making," in Jeffrey Hou, Sabine Knierbein, eds., *City Unsilenced: Urban Resistance and Public Space in the Age of Shrinking Democracy* (Routledge, 2017) 83-92.

Dilek Özdemir & İrem Selçuk, "From Pedestrianisation to Commercial Gentrification: The Case of [Kadıköy in Istanbul](#) ,

"*Cities* 65 (2017) 10–23.
Jeffrey Hou, "Beyond Zuccotti Park: Making the Public," *Places Journal* (September, 2012) <https://placesjournal.org/article/beyond-zuccotti-park-making-the-public/> (Links to an external site.)

Ali [Madanipour](#) , "Introduction," *Whose Public Space: International Case Studies in Urban Design & Development* (2010).

02/18 Week 5: Regulation and Governance (UD Addis trip)

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and R. Ehrenfeucht, [Sidewalks](#) : *Conflict and Negotiation over Public Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011) 243-64. Muni control

Jeremy Németh, "Defining a Public: The [Management of Privately Owned Public Space](#) ,

Urban Studies 46: 11 (October 2009) 2463–2490.

Douglas Woodward, "[Rules of Conduct](#) ,

Urban Omnibus (May 9, 2012).

Nicholas Blomley, *Rights of Passage: Sidewalks and the Regulation of Public Flow* (2011)

Mitchell Duneier, *Sidewalk* (1999).

02/25 Week 6: In-class discussion of Dossier

03/03 Week 7: Pedestrian Planning 1

Victor [Gruen](#) , *The Heart of Our Cities* (1964) 209-242

Michael Cheyne, "No Better Way? The [Kalamazoo](#)  Mall and the Legacy of Pedestrian Malls," *Michigan Historical Review* 36, no. 1 (2010): 103–28.

Carmen Hass-Kau, *The Pedestrian and the City* (Routledge, 2015)

Kelly Gregg, "Conceptualizing the Pedestrian Mall in Post-War North America and Understanding its Transatlantic Transfer through the Work and Influence of Victor Gruen," *Planning Perspectives* (2018) 2-24.

Paul Hess, Kelly Gregg & Ryan Whitney, "Modernism, Pedestrians and Public Space: A Century of North American Street Design," in Tridib Banerjee, Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, eds., *New Companion to Urban Design* (2019) 612-23.

Oudin, A. et al, "Une Rénovation de L'espace Public: les rues piétonnes, équipement collectif ouvert ou réservé?" *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 25 (March 1972) 19-35.

03/10 Week 8: Pedestrian Planning 2

Roberto Brambilla, "More Streets for People," in Brambilla, ed., *More Streets for People* (1974) 14-27.

Mariana Mogilevich, "[Ambulatory Therapy](#): Psychologies of Pedestrianization in New York and Copenhagen," *Candide* 9 (2015) 98-112.

Harvey Rubenstein, *Central City Malls* (Wiley, 1978)

Gregory Smithsion, "A Stiff Clarifying Test Is in Order: *Occupy* and Negotiating Rights in Public Space," in Schiffman et. al., eds, *Beyond Zuccotti Park: Freedom of Assembly and the Occupation of Public Space* (2012) 34-47.

03/17 Week 9: Spring Break