

SE220 Social Justice and Urban Spaces

Seminar Leader: Dr. Cassandra Ellerbe-Dueck

Course Times: Wednesdays 15:15 – 16:45 & 17:00- 18:30

Email: c.ellerbedueck@berlin.bard.edu

Office Hours:

Course Description:

Urban spaces have often served as the backdrop for social justice movements and politicized organizing. Racial and ethnic tensions, gender and socioeconomic inequality, forced or voluntary migration etc. are undoubtedly issues that have been at the forefront of many emancipatory movements. However, these issues also play a significant role in how urban space(s) are structured and experienced, and utilized in the struggle for socio-political justice and transformation.

In this course we will explore in depth the significance of social justice, politicized mobilization and how these issues have developed within urban space(s) across the globe.

Utilizing an interdisciplinary theoretical perspective (social justice theory, human/social geography, post-colonial and intersectional theory), we will analyze various historical as well as current contexts that are linked to social justice based movements of marginalized groups in various urban spaces across the globe.

This course aims not only to discuss the purpose of and necessity for social justice and political activism, but also to assist students in the development of critical thinking and a contextual understanding of a variety of urban-related social problems.

The course entails lectures, in class discussions and presentations, off-campus visits to various Berlin based organizations, and guest lectures by local experts and scholars.

Course Objectives:

This course will be interactive and of a hands-on nature, therefore class attendance and participation in class discussions is mandatory. Your presence and active participation in the class will not only increase your ability to reflect on the issue of social justice, but also to foster the development of critical thinking and a contextual understanding of a variety of urban-related social problems.

Further, there are several primary questions that will accompany this course:

1. What is social justice and why is necessary?
2. What does my social positioning inform my views and decisions?
3. How do identity formation and space intersect?
4. How does this happen in various spaces across the globe?
5. Why are “safe “space(s) important and for whom?

Course Structure:

The course entails lectures, in class discussions and presentations, off-campus visits to various Berlin based organisations, and guest lectures by local activists & scholars.

We will be looking at the following cases studies & organisations:

- Audre Lorde: The Berlin Years 1984-1992
- The Young Lords – 1968-1973
- Berlin Postcolonial
- Theatre of the Oppressed - 2013

Required Course Texts: These texts are available in the Bard College Berlin library

- **Social Justice & Diversity**

Adams, Maurianne : *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*. Routledge: Chapman Hall 2013

- **The Black German Movement:**

Oguntoye & Opitz: *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out*. University of Massachusetts Press 1992

- **The Young Lords:**

Enck-Wanzer, Darrel : *The Young Lords. A Reader*. New York University Press: New York 2010.

- **Theater of the Oppressed:**

Boal, Augusto: *Theater of the Oppressed*. (engl. translation) Theatre Communications Group Inc. New York: 1979.

Additional required reading materials will be handed out as photocopies and/or will be available on-line.

Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory. Please note that any unexcused absences will have a negative impact on your participation grade, and having more than two unexcused absences- in this case missing two full sessions (15:15- 18:30) - for the semester will automatically reduce your final cumulative mark by one full letter grade. In addition, students must be aware that the Bard College Berlin attendance policy specifically stipulates that missing more than 30% (in this case, eight) of the required class meetings means that you cannot receive credit for the course. You should review the full Bard College Berlin attendance policy stated in the Student Handbook: <http://www.berlin.bard.edu/for-students/student-handbook/academics/>

Assessment

Writing Assignments

This course has homework assignments consisting of two pages or max. 800 words. It also has informal assignments, including giving short oral presentations on the case studies dealt within the course, and writing short responses to guest lectures and off-campus visits. This course requires active and informed participation. Student participation is a pertinent element of the course and will be graded.

You are expected to have all assignments (i.e. readings,) completed for each class. Please make every effort to contact and communicate with me if you are facing a challenging situation that hinders your ability to complete an assignment on time.

In addition, a group analysis & action plan project will constitute part of the course's final grade. Students will form groups, analyze a social justice case/movement and create an action plan for positive change based upon one of the course's topics, or a topic that has been discussed with the instructor. Group action plan presentations will take place during the course's last three sessions. Groups and topics for the action plan will be determined by week 6 (8 March 2017).

The final 1500 word paper for the course is due 19 May 2017 and may be a standard essay or the analysis of a social justice related case study from the student's respective countries or based upon the student's group action plan. The paper should reference at least two or more of the readings and at least three of the theoretical approaches that we have discussed and examined during the course. Creative approaches and or interdisciplinary analysis are highly encouraged and welcomed.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

All essays are to be submitted via the Bard College Berlin electronic collection system, and thus will receive a time stamp. Late essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade.

Essays that are more than 24 hours late will also be downgraded one full grade and cannot earn a grade higher than a C. Essays that are more than 72 hours late will not be accepted.

Academic Integrity:

In this course, we aim to conduct ourselves as a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. However, you are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. When you use another's ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it in the MLA parenthetical format (<http://www.mla.org/style>). Any incidents of academic dishonesty, be they, large or small, will not be tolerated and will be reported the Academic Administration and may result in failure for the entire course. The complete Bard College Berlin policy on academic integrity is detailed in the Student Handbook and can be read online: <http://www.berlin.bard.edu/for-students/student-handbook/>

Cellphones, Laptops & iPads: Cellphones should be switched off for the duration of class. Laptops & iPads are allowed only when necessary for class activities.

Please note that the following course outline is provisional. Changes to the assignment and seminar schedule will be communicated in class and via the Bard College Berlin email system. *It is your responsibility to remain up-to-date on course assignments and due dates!*

Grade Breakdown

Class participation and attendance	30%
Short presentations	20%
Reading & homework assignments	10%
Final paper & group action plan	40%

Class Schedule: Tentative

Week 1

Wed. / 1 February

Introduction: social justice theory & the significance of space

Lecture & discussion Pt. 1

Reading: selections from Maurianne Adams: *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*.

Reading: Iris Marion Young: *Justice and the Politics of Difference* - Chapters 1 -3 & 8

Week 2 – No class

Wed. 8 February

This session will be made up at a later date.

Week 3

Wed. /15 February

15:15- 16:45

1. Lecture & discussion

Introduction to Human/Social geography:

Reading: David Delany: *The Space That Race Makes*

Reading: Linda Peake & Audrey Kobayashi: *Policies and Practices for an Antiracist Geography at the Millennium*

Discussion question:

- Race, gender and sexuality are categories of social life. How do these categories intersect with space/ urban space?
- Can you list a few examples from your place of origin and elaborate on them?

17:00-18:30

2. Reading: Chris Hedges: *Wages of Rebellion* - Chapter 3. *The Invisible Revolution*

Film-Clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3g_zSvtSs-A

Week 4 - Assignment from week 1 & 3 due !

Wed./22 February

15:15 – 16:45

1st Case Study – Audre Lorde- The Berlin Years 1984-1992

Reading: Reading: Oguntoye et.al *Showing our Colors: Black German Women Speak Out* (1992)

Reading: Ellerbe-Dueck, Cassandra & Wekker, Gloria: *Naming Ourselves as Black Women in Europe* in Audre Lorde's *Transnational Legacies* (2015)

Reading: Ellerbe-Dueck, Cassandra: *Networks and Safe Spaces of Black European Women in Europe* (2011).

Film- Audre Lorde the Berlin Years by Dagmar Schulz

17:00- 18:30

Guest lecture by Jasmin Eding (ADEFRA München)

Week 5 - Lecture response due!

Wed. / 1 March

15:15 – 16:45

Critical Race Theory in the US & German context

Short input & film clip about critical race theory

Reading: Nora Räthzel: *Creating Spaces of Fear and Spaces of Safety* (2005)

Discussion questions:

How does critical race theory assist us in the critical examination of US and German society? How does this theory enable us to understand spatial perspectives and social justice concerns? Is this theoretical concept applicable in other contexts?

17:00- 18:30

Film - Racial profiling in Germany: *ID – Without Colors*

Are there differences and similarities between the US & German context?

How does the notion of safe space(s) figure within the issue of racial profiling?

Describe the forms of resistance that you noticed within the film.

Does this occur in your country of origin or socialization?

Week 6

Wed. / 8 March

15:15-16:45

Student presentations and discussion: Group 1

Students will be required to make short max. 10 min. individual presentations/responses based on the first case study and or lecture topics:

17:00-18:30 – Group 2

Week 7

Wed. /15 March-
15:15- 16:45

2nd Case study – The Young Lords (1968-1972)

Reading: Darrel Enck-Wanzer: *The Young Lords. A Reader*. Chapter 1-3, 7 & 8

Reading: *David Harvey: Social Justice in the City* - Chapter 4. P. 120- 152

Film & discussion: ¡Palante siempre Palante!

17:00- 18:30

Film- *The Young Lords and Latino Activism in the 1970s*

Week 8 –

Wed. 22/March
15:15- 16:45

Intersectional theory

Introduction to intersectional theory

Lecture & discussion

Reading: Kimberlé Crenshaw: *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color*

17:00 – 18:30

Film-Clip: *The Urgency of Intersectionality*

Discussion & exercise: Postcolonial space, gender, power and privilege.

Week 9 – Assignment from week 7&8 due!

Wed/ 29 March - Female power, Colonized Spaces & Social Justice:

15:15 – 16:45

In this session we will utilize intersectional and post-colonial theory in looking at social justice activism in two particular geographical locations.

The Dalit community in India - Phoolan Devi

Podcast: Phoolan Devi- The Bandit Queen – Should be listened to prior to this session:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00xnxy>

Film-Clip: Phoolan Devi

17:00 – 18:30

Film & discussion: *Women of the The Young Lords* - Panel discussion from the 2015 exhibition titled *Presente*

Reading: *The Young Lords. A Reader* - Chapter 7

Week 10

Wed./5 April: Gender Sexuality and Space

15:15- 16:45

Reading: Jin Haritaworn: Queer Lovers and Hateful Others (excerpts- Introduction & Chapter 1 p.36-53.

17:00- 18:30

Film-Clip: The New Transgender Movement

Week 11 – Spring break – No session

Week 12

Wed. /19 April

15:15- 18:30

Migrant LBGTIQ Organising & Creating Safe Space(s):

Off-campus visit to LesMigraS –

Discussion with Jennifer Petzer – Managing Director of LesMigraS tbc.

Week 13 – Assignment from week 10 & 12 due!

Wed. / 26 April

15:15- 16:45

3rd Case Study – Berlin-Postcolonial – Decolonize the City

Lecture & discussion- German Colonial footprints – No Place in the Sun

Walking Tour- Berlin Postcolonial (tbc.)

Week 14

Wed/3 May

15:15- 16:45

4th Case study: Theater of the Oppressed
Selected Readings from Augusto Boal's text

The Theatre of the Oppressed is a worldwide non-violent aesthetic movement, which seeks peace, not passivity. Theater is emphasized not as a spectacle but rather as a language accessible to all. More specifically, it is a rehearsal theater designed for people who want to learn ways of fighting back against oppression in their daily lives.

Reading: Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*

Discussion questions:

- What exactly is Theatre of the Oppressed and how does it relate to issues of social justice?
- How does this technique deal with the subject of space and how it intersects with gender, race/racialization, age, sexuality ?
- How has this work/technique been adapted within various contexts across the globe??

Guest lecture: Bárbara Santos –Director of Kuringa e.V. – *Theater der Unterdrückten*, Berlin – (tbc.)

Week 15

Wed. / 10 May

Presentation- 1. Group action plan

Presentation- 2. Group action plan

Week 16 Completion week

Tues./ 17 May

Presentation- 3. Group action plan

Presentation- 4. Group action plan

Fri. / 19 May

Final paper due