

GEOGRAPHY 170
On the Move: Mobility, Infrastructure, and Urban Life

Prof. John Stehlin
Fall 2017
M/W 10:30 – 12:00
145 McCone Hall

Contact: johnstehlin@berkeley.edu
Office: McCone Hall Room 561
Office Hours: Wednesday, 12:20 – 2:00 PM or by appointment

Course Description

What does mobility mean for our senses of place, identity, and livelihood? How do transportation systems, pipelines and electrical grids but also transnational financial institutions, remittance networks, and global think-tanks make urban space what it is? This course will examine the ways in which urban life is shaped by the mobility of people, objects, ideas, and resources. We will examine the technologies and infrastructures of urban mobility both historically and in the present, through theory, empirical case studies, literature, and film.

This is a somewhat experimental course. What you get from it will primarily depend on your curiosity, preparation, and engagement. The issues we will discuss are central to my intellectual interests and scholarship, but that does not mean I am an “expert” with the ultimate answers on any particular debate. The purpose of the course is to try on mobility and infrastructure as “lenses” through which to view the world in a new light. My goal is also to help you develop your skills as researchers, which I hope will be useful beyond the specific topic of the class.

Course Objectives

- Introduce contemporary theories of mobility and infrastructure in human geography, anthropology, and science and technology studies
- Build familiarity with sources of data on transportation, infrastructure, commuting flows, and migration
- Develop skills in research design and peer review

Course Requirements & Grading Criteria

Completion of all course components is necessary in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Attendance & participation (40% of final grade):

Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class and arrive each week prepared to participate **actively** in discussion and activities. Several small assignments will be administered as part of the participation grade.

Midterm exam (20% of final grade):

The course midterm is scheduled to be distributed on Wednesday, October 4 and will be due **Monday, October 9.**

Term project (40% of final grade):

The term project for this course will be to develop an independent, self-directed research

plan. This will not look like a traditional term paper, but will instead outline a research problem, a relevant body of literature, sources of evidence and data, and methods for finding this evidence and data. A separate handout will explain the expectations more fully.

Grade Scale

93-100	A	83-87	B	73-77	C
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-
88-89	B+	78-79	C+	68-69	D+

Academic Integrity

Any test, paper, report or homework submitted under your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course. All words and ideas written by other people must be properly attributed: fully identified as to source and the extent of your use of their work. Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, quiz, or exam in question and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

All written work will use a proper social science citation format (e.g. Chicago, American Sociological Association, American Political Science Association). Five percentage points will be deducted from any submission that lacks proper citation and a bibliography. See guidance on attribution, citation, and citation management software here: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/research-support/cite-sources>.

Student Resources

Berkeley Student Learning Center: <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Offers peer tutoring, writing support, and other academic resources.

Disabled Students' Program: <http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu>

Provides a wide range of resources to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, including advising, diagnostics, note-taking services, and academic accommodations.

Tang Center Services: <http://uhs.berkeley.edu/students/counseling/cps.shtml>

Offers short and long-term counseling services to assist students with a variety of concerns including academic success, life management, career and life planning, and personal development.

Office Hours

Wed, 12:20 – 2:00 PM, or by email appointment, 561 McCone. Please sign up online here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/zovpx>.

Please include “GEOG 170” in the subject line of all email correspondence.

Course Website

Please see the [bCourses](#) site for the syllabus, announcements, and additional resources. PDFs of course materials will be posted here, along with supplementary materials and items of interest. **I will communicate information about readings, assignments, section exercises primarily by bCourses, so please check your email regularly.**

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs

Please bring these to the attention of the Disabled Students Program office (dsp.berkeley.edu/), and once I have heard from them I will do my best to accommodate you.

Textbook & Readings

All of the readings will be available on the bCourses site. Should interest warrant, these will be compiled into a bound reader. Readings marked as “Suggested” on the syllabus can also be found on the bCourses site.

Readings are an essential element of this class. Class time will primarily be used to discuss the readings, so if you are unprepared you will not be able to contribute. You are responsible for all material in the assigned readings, whether or not it is covered during class time.

For some readings, the page numbers of the most important passages to focus on will appear on the syllabus like so: **(127-34)**. This does not mean you should skip the other sections – at the very least skim them so that you know how the important parts fit into the overall argument.

In Modules, you will see required and suggested readings in a staggered list under each week’s heading. For example, on bCourses, the readings for Week 12 will appear like so:

Sassen – Locating Cities in Global Circuits.pdf	← required
Lowry & McCann – Asia in the Mix.pdf	← required
Lung Amam – Malls of Meaning.pdf	← suggested

Wise words about reading strategically:

*Social science should be read differently than other kinds of material... Don't start with the first word and continue to the last word. Try to **figure out the overall argument** before you begin reading, by looking for summaries at the beginning or end of each section or chapter. This isn't a detective novel, so it's better to **know the conclusion before you set out**... Don't get bogged down. Once you know what you're looking for, it'll be easier to choose which paragraphs and sections to read carefully and which you can skim. **Yes, skim.** And if there's material you can't apprehend after a serious try, jot down your question to ask in class and then move on. (Professor Marc Blecher, Oberlin College).*

There is too much material to try to do the readings—even skimming!—at the last minute, so please keep up!

WEEK 1 – INTRODUCTION (8/23)

Martin Wachs, “A Very Brief History of Why Americans Hate Their Commutes,” *City Lab* (2014), available at: <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2014/02/very-brief-history-why-americans-hate-their-daily-commutes/8224/>

WEEK 2 – KEY CONCEPTS (8/28-8/30)

Peter Adey, *Mobility* (2010), pp. 1-32 (**1-13, 17-32**)

Maria Kaika & Erik Swyngedouw, “Fetishizing the Modern City,” *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* (2000), pp. 337-63 (**355-61**)

Susan Leigh Star, “The Ethnography of Infrastructure,” *American Behavioral Scientist* (1999), pp. 377-91 (**379-82, 384-9**)

Suggested: Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern West* (2006), pp. 1-27 (**2-9, 15-21**)

Suggested: Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities, and the Urban Condition* (2001), pp. 7-36

PART I – THE LOCAL

WEEK 3 – PEOPLE AS INFRASTRUCTURE (9/6)

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), 29-88 (**50-4, 68-71**)

AbdouMaliq Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar* (2009), pp. 1-59 (**1-20**)

Vikas Mehta, “The Street as Ecology,” in *Incomplete Streets: Processes, Politics, Practices* (2014), pp. 36-53

WEEK 4 – PLACE & CIRCULATION (9/11-9/13)

Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), pp. 91-110 (**97-103**)

Finn Bowring, “LETS: An Eco-Socialist Initiative,” *New Left Review* (1998), pp. 91-111 (**98-107**)

Suggested: Walter Benjamin, “The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire” (1938), pp. 46-134 (**66-71, 91-6**)

Suggested: Roger Lee et al., “Making Geographies and Histories? Constructing Local Circuits of Value,” *Environment & Planning A* (2004)

WEEK 5 – NO CLASS (9/18-9/20)

WEEK 6 – ENABLING MOVEMENT (9/25-9/27)

David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (2003), pp. 102-12, 202-18

Peter Norton, *Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City* (2002), pp. 65-70, 129-42, 248-54

Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel’s Architecture of Occupation* (2007), pp. 185-220 (**193-201**)

Suggested: David Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (2003), pp. 89-100

WEEK 7 – AFTER THE MOTOR AGE? (10/2-10/4)

People for Bikes, *Protected Bike Lanes Mean Business: How 21st Century Transportation Networks Help New Urban Economies Boom* (2013), available at: http://www.sfbike.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Protected_Bike_Lanes_Mean_Business.pdf (**skim**)

Adonia Lugo & Allison Mannos, “Separate but Eco: Livable Communities for Whom?” *StreetsBlog LA* (2012), available at: <http://la.streetsblog.org/2012/05/21/separate-but-eco-livable-communities-for-whom/>

Aaron Golub, “Moving Beyond Fordism: ‘Complete Streets’ and the Changing Political Economy of Urban Transportation,” in *Incomplete Streets: Processes, Politics, Practices* (2014), pp. 94-115

Sam Levin, “It’s not for me’: how San Francisco’s bike-share scheme became a symbol of gentrification,” *The Guardian UK* (2017), available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/21/bike-sharing-scheme-san-francisco-gentrification-vandalism>

Colin Marshall, “Want to join New York’s High Line crowd? Don’t listen to Joanna Lumley,” *The Guardian UK* (2017), available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/aug/15/new-york-high-line-crowd-london-garden-bridge-urban-design>

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS, WEDNESDAY 10/4

PART II – THE CITY & THE REGION

WEEK 8 – SPLINTERING URBANISM (10/9-10/11)

Stephen Graham & Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities, and the Urban Condition* (2001), pp. 219-303

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE IN CLASS, MONDAY 10/9

WEEK 9 – GETTING AROUND (10/16-10/18)

Eric Ávila, *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (2014), selections

Susan Hanson & Geraldine Pratt, *Gender, Work, and Space* (1995), selections

Suggested: Raymond Mohl, *The Interstates and the Cities: Highways, Housing, and the Freeway Revolt* (2002), pp. 1-50

WEEK 10 – ENERGY & URBAN METABOLISM (10/23-10/25)

Matthew Gandy, *Concrete & Clay: Reworking Nature in New York City* (2002), pp. 19-76

Alan Wiig, “Demanding Connectivity: The Co-production of Mobile Communication Through Electrical and Digital Infrastructures,” in *Demanding Energy: Space, Time, and Change* (2017), pp. 1-15

Suggested: Alex Loftus, “The Metabolic Processes of Capital Accumulation in Durban’s

Waterscape,” in *In the Nature of Cities* (2006), pp. 165-82

WEEK 11 – A JUST REGION? (10/30-11/1)

- Karen Chapple, “Incomplete Streets, Complete Regions: Searching for an Equitable Scale,” in *Incomplete Streets: Process, Practices, and Possibilities* (2014), pp. 291-305
- Alana Semuels, “Highways Destroyed America's Cities: Can Tearing Them Down Bring Revitalization?” *The Atlantic* (2015), available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/11/highways-destroyed-americas-cities/417789/>
- Theresa Enright, “Contesting the Networked Metropolis: The Grand Paris Regime of Metromobility,” in *Transportation, Mobility, and the Production of Space* (2015), pp. 172-86

PART III – THE GLOBAL

WEEK 12 – NODE CITIES (11/6-11/8)

- Saskia Sassen, “Introduction: Locating Cities in Global Circuits,” in *Global Networks, Linked Cities* (2002), pp. 1-36 (**1-9, 13-25**)
- Glen Lowry & Eugene McCann, “Asia in the Mix: Urban Form and Global Mobilities – Hong Kong, Vancouver, Dubai,” in *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments in the Art of Being Global* (2011), pp.182-205 (**182-6, 192-200**)
- Suggested:* Willow Lung Amam, “Malls of Meaning: Building Asian America in Silicon Valley Suburbia,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* (2015)

WEEK 13 – GLOBAL URBAN INFRASTRUCTURES (11/13-11/15)

- Markus Hesse, *The City as a Terminal* (2008), pp. 13-29, 47-64
- Bryan Walsh, “The Surprisingly Large Energy Footprint of the Digital Economy,” *Time Magazine* (2013), <http://science.time.com/2013/08/14/power-drain-the-digital-cloud-is-using-more-energy-than-you-think/>
- Sarah Lynn Lopez, *The Remittance Landscape* (2015), selections

WEEK 14 – IDEA FLOWS (11/20)

- Astrid Wood, “Learning through policy tourism: circulating bus rapid transit from South America to South Africa,” *Environment & Planning A* (2014)
- Suggested:* Jamie Peck & Nik Theodore, *Fast Policy: Experimental Statecraft at the Thresholds of Neoliberalism* (2015), pp. 45-84 (**45-65, 79-84**)

WEEK 15 – CITIES OF TOMORROW? (11/27-11/29)

- Aidan While, “Carbon Regulation and Low-Carbon Urban Restructuring,” in *After Sustainable Cities?* (2014), pp. 41-58
- Kian Goh, “Who’s Smart? Whose City? The Sociopolitics of Urban Intelligence” in *Planning*

Support Systems & Smart Cities (2015), pp. 169-87

WEEK 16 – R/R/R WEEK (12/4-12/6)

FINAL PROJECT DUE FRIDAY, 12/15