

**SPRING 2024 SYLLABUS FOR SPRING 2025 ADVANCED REGISTRATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

URBS 2060/5060

**THE PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT OF CITIES – Reading the City as a Text**

Spring 2024

Wednesdays, 1:45 to 4:45 PM

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*“There are times when expanding our imaginations is what is required.  
The radical movement has over emphasized the role of activism and  
underestimated the role of reflection.”*

Grace Lee Boggs

**INSTRUCTOR:**

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**COURSE SUMMARY**

*The Pandemic and its Impacts on Urban Public Space*

Social infrastructure is not “social capital”—a concept commonly used to measure people’s relationships and interpersonal networks—but the physical conditions that determine whether social capital develops.

*Palaces for the People, (Introduction)*

Mark your calendars. This term we are thrilled to welcome the eminent sociologist, Eric Klinenberg, to URBS 2060. He will be coming to class on 21 February followed by Penn’s Urban Studies annual Bodek Lecture at 5:30PM. In class we will discuss his new book, *2020: One City, Seven People, and the Year Everything Changed* which will be released on 13 February. We will also discuss his book, *Palaces for the People*, in which he documents the role of social infrastructure in our culture.

*The City as a Text*

Everywhere I walked on the waterfront, I saw the present as a layered accumulation of older narratives. I tried to read the city like a text. One textual layer was the past, going back to, well, the Ice Age; another layer was the present—whatever or whoever was popping up in my view at the moment; another layer contained the built environment, that is to say the architecture or piers or parks currently along the shore; another layer still was my personal history, the memories thrown up by visiting this or that spot; yet another layer consisted of the cultural record—the literature or films or other

artwork that threw a reflecting light on the matter at hand; and finally there was the invisible or imagined layer—what I thought should be on the waterfront but wasn't. At any one point I would give myself the freedom to be drawn to this or that layer, in combination or alone.  
Lopate, Phillip. Waterfront: A Journey Around Manhattan (Kindle 171-176)

*Being a Flâneur or Flâneuse*

“A flâneur is a stroller, a loiterer, someone who ambles without apparent purpose but is secretly attuned to the history of the streets he walks – and is in covert search of adventure, aesthetic or erotic.”

Sarah D.

The Brooklyn Flâneur, <https://brooklynflaneur.wordpress.com>

Cities are living laboratories that demonstrate the historic and current processes that shape them. The course will explore the city through walking, observing, thinking, describing, mapping, and recording our experiences as we travel through it. This course develops your experiential knowledge as opposed to expert knowledge.

We will examine in detail how contemporary issues affect our perceptions, use, and inhabitation of the public environment, and how the public spaces of the city provide frameworks for the daily social life and commerce as well as the important ceremonies, celebrations, and festivities of its inhabitants. Along the way we see different places and meet the people who inhabit them. We have many guides through neighborhoods and districts that are both familiar and unfamiliar. Competing narratives circulate describing the processes that shape the cities in which we live. Most have their origins in the lived experience of residents and former residents at times of critical change which may or may not represent a clear picture of what has and is happening. Yet these narratives often gain a currency used for political purposes. One such narrative is that of Penn and West Philadelphia, which will serve as our departure points for being flâneurs and flâneuses.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

The Public Environment is a seminar course with both instructor and student led discussions. Participation is essential to the learning process. Each of us has the responsibility to share our insight, experience, and knowledge. Students with disabilities or that require special arrangements for field trips are encouraged to speak with me.

We will be out of the classroom as much as the weather permits. We will not be out in the snow, rain, and bitter cold. We may go out when the weather is seasonally normal. **Please dress accordingly and dress for 10 degrees cooler than you think it may be. We often stand in shade where it will seem cooler than the air temperature.**

## COURSE POLICIES

### *ACADEMIC INTEGRITY*

Please note that we expect that you will adhere to the strictest standards of academic integrity in all of your work. Students may work together on certain projects, but all written work must be completed individually. Any student who is found to have violated the university's code will fail the class. If you need help in learning how to cite materials, the library has a helpful website at

<http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT/documentation/>

### *LATE WORK*

Please do your best to plan ahead and ask for an extension on any paper well in advance if you need one. We are very accommodating about extensions, and do not mark grades down for late work if you ask for an extension before the due date (or if you have a last-minute personal emergency, health or otherwise). If you do not ask for an extension before the due date (or have a last-minute emergency), late work will be marked down one full grade (e.g., A to B).

### *ABSENCES*

Attendance is mandatory but I understand life happens. Please inform me of any anticipated absences from class meetings well in advance. If you do not, or do not have a last-minute emergency, this will be considered an unexcused absence.

You are permitted two (2) unexcused absences during the semester after which your grade will be affected. Please do not email me with reasons or excuses. We reserve the right to fail any person who misses more than four (4) classes.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### *CITIZENSHIP ASSIGNMENT:*

The key requirements are preparation and participation. We are in the field most of the term and in the classroom only for special events and in the case of inclement weather. The basis of the discussions will be the lectures, readings, field trips, and analyses of particular places. Field trip attendance is mandatory.

#### ASSIGNMENT

- Class participation/discussion leading/questions.
  - A. Students are expected to participate in every class.
  - B. Come prepared with questions for each field trip.

### *WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT*

Weekly Assignment:

Working in groups of two (2) or three (3), develop a concise background, context, and demographic profile for the week's upcoming field trip. Identify the important issues,

community trends, ownership patterns, and demographic history that tell the story of the area we will be visiting. Use Social Explorer and/or Policy Map, newspaper articles, interviews (time permitting) as well as the census to develop them.

#### *FIELD NOTES:*

Writing field notes is an essential qualitative methodological tool. They are used to describe observations made in the field. We will be observing the built environment and the social use of designed spaces. We are visually observing the built environment at pedestrian speed. We must develop a type of annotation that can be used while walking. I suggest using your phones to record your observations using both your camera and voice memos. When you return home, you write up your field notes.

Submit field notes for four (4) field trips during the semester.

#### *MODULE ASSIGNMENT*

Four modules of approximately three weeks in length comprise the course. During each module you must write one short analytical statement demonstrating your response to readings and your observations on field trips. Feel free to write on another subject relating to the material that needs explication. These short analyses and responses should be between 800-1,200 words.

#### *PUBLIC LIFE JOURNAL AND PHOTOESSAY*

(see detailed explanation and requirements at the conclusion of the syllabus)

#### **EVALUATION AND GRADING**

Class participation (on tours as well as in class)	20%
Module Assignments	30%
Field test	10%
Public Life Photo Essay	40%

"A city is a particular kind of place, perhaps best described as many worlds in one place; it compounds many version without quite reconciling them, though some cross over to live in multiple worlds -- in Chinatown or queer space, in a drug underworld or a university community, in a church's sphere or a hospital's intersections. An atlas is a collection of versions of a place, a compendium of perspectives, a snatching out of the infinite ether of potential versions a few that will be made concrete and visible...A map is in its essence and intent an arbitrary selection of information. An atlas may represent many places in the same way or the same place in many ways, and it is in the myriad

descriptions that the maps begin to approximate the rich complexity of the place, of a place, of any place."

Rebecca Solnit, *Invisible City*

## SCHEDULE

### **Module 1 – The Pandemic and the Public City**

#### **January 24 – February 21**

We will meet outside, weather permitting, or in the classroom, in the case of inclement weather. Proposed for the first four weeks of the semester is a series of short(er) walks during the very unpredictable winter weather. Two of the walks can be done individually if we are on Zoom.

#### **WALKS**

- Penn Campus tour (weather permitting) (group or individually)
- 40<sup>th</sup> Street (group or individually)
- Drexel, Powelton Village, Mantua, and Lancaster Avenue
- Baltimore Avenue, Clark Park, Cedar Park

#### **January 24 *The Public Realm***

##### **CLASS**

- Penn Campus Identification Hunt (outdoor in groups so dress warmly)
- <https://www.inquirer.com/entertainment/movies/inq2/philly-movie-location-guesser-game-20240116.html>
- Field notes
- Social Life of Small Urban Spaces (time permitting)
- David Harvey and the City (time permitting)
- Walking the periphery of Philadelphia

#### **January 30: Introductory Essay Due**

##### **ASSIGNMENT:**

- Describe your favorite city walk and analyze what it reveals about the underlying processes that shape the built environment. (500 words max)

#### **January 31 *The Pandemic and the Public City***

##### **FIELD TRIP**

- University City, 40<sup>th</sup> St. Chestnut St. and Walnut St. to 43<sup>rd</sup> St
- Field observation exercise

##### **READINGS**

- Klinenberg, Eric, *Palaces for the People*, Introduction "The Social Infrastructure," and Chapter 1 "A Place to Gather," pp. 1-54.

- Klinenberg, Eric, **2020: One City, Seven People, and the Year Everything Changed**, Chapters 1-3 (on Canvas)
  - Sennett, Richard. "Exposure". *The Conscience of the Eye*. Norton. 1990. pp. 121-149
  - Williams, Richard J., *Why Cities Look the Way They Do*, "Chapter 1, "Introduction," pp. 25-51. [Why Cities Look the Way They Do by Richard J. Williams.pdf](#)
  - <https://www.universitycity.org/development/data>
  - PennPraxis, "Civic Goals and Urban Design Strategies for the 40th Street Corridor" 2011.
  - Helmreich, William B. *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles In The City*, 2015, "Introduction," Chapter 2 "Selling Hot Dogs, Planting Flowers, and Living the Dream: New Comers," and "From Washington Heights to Hudson Heights, from Soho to Soha: Gentrification," pp 1-71, and 231-295.
- NOTE: Read this at your leisure over the next few weeks.

## February 7: The Pandemic and the Public City

### FIELD TRIP

- Center City, Market Street East,
- Field observation exercise

### READINGS

- Klinenberg, Eric, *Palaces for the People*, Chapter 2 "Safe Spaces," pp. 55-82. and Chapter 3 "Learning Together,"
- Klinenberg, Eric, **2020: One City, Seven People, and the Year Everything Changed**, Chapters 4-7
- <https://theconversation.com/traditional-downtowns-are-dead-or-dying-in-many-us-cities-whats-next-for-these-zones-213963>
- Penn IUR, [https://penniur.upenn.edu/publications/expert-voices-2024?mc\\_cid=8f15485de6&mc\\_eid=3f0b890147](https://penniur.upenn.edu/publications/expert-voices-2024?mc_cid=8f15485de6&mc_eid=3f0b890147)
- Anderson, Elijah, "A Center City Walking Tour," "The Gallery Mall: The Ghetto Next Door," *Cosmopolitan Canopy*. 2011, pp. 104-151.
- Williams, Richard J., *Why Cities Look the Way They Do*, "Chapter 2, "Money," pp. 25-51. [Why Cities Look the Way They Do by Richard J. Williams.pdf](#)

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Newman, Andrew, "Introduction," *The Landscape of Discontent*, xiii-xliii. [Newman The Landscape of Discontent Intro.pdf](#)
- Rotella, Carlo, The Unexpected Power of Your Old Neighborhood, *New Yorker*, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-unexpected-power-of-your-old-neighborhood> [Links to an external site.](#)
- Schwarzer, Mitchell, <https://placesjournal.org/article/privatizing-the-public-city/> [Links to an external site.](#), *Places*

- Didion, Joan. "Trouble with Lakewood". *New Yorker*. 9 August 1993. Reprinted and Updated in Didion, Joan. *Where I Was From*. Knopf. 2003 pp. 93-152. [https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1993/07/26/trouble-in-lakewood?mbid=nl\\_Sunday%20Archive%20112518&CNDID=41124031&utm\\_source=nl&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Sunday%20Archive%20112518&utm\\_content=&utm\\_brand=tny&utm\\_mailing=Sunday%20Archive%20112518&hasha=ceadb4fc515da6f492941454343cc7f1&hashb=73b4b06a220a073df35993a3a64268804e372b67&spMailingID=14664332&spUserID=MTMzMTg0ODY0NDc2S0&spJobID=1521675168&spReportId=MTUyMTY3NTE2](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1993/07/26/trouble-in-lakewood?mbid=nl_Sunday%20Archive%20112518&CNDID=41124031&utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Sunday%20Archive%20112518&utm_content=&utm_brand=tny&utm_mailing=Sunday%20Archive%20112518&hasha=ceadb4fc515da6f492941454343cc7f1&hashb=73b4b06a220a073df35993a3a64268804e372b67&spMailingID=14664332&spUserID=MTMzMTg0ODY0NDc2S0&spJobID=1521675168&spReportId=MTUyMTY3NTE2).

### February 14: The Pandemic and the Public City

#### FIELD TRIP

- Chinatown and the Proposed Stadium

#### READINGS

- Klinenberg, Eric, *Palaces for the People*, Chapter 4 "Healthy Bonds," and Chapter 5 "Common Ground,"
  - Klinenberg, Eric, **2020: One City, Seven People, and the Year Everything Changed**, Chapters 8-12
  - Readings on Chinatown and the proposed arena will be on Canvas
  - Greenspan, Elizabeth, "Nictown," <https://placesjournal.org/article/nictown-inequality-in-philadelphia/?cn-reloaded=1>Links to an external site.
- NOTE: excellent model for how urbanists write about neighborhoods
- Williams, Richard J., *Why Cities Look the Way They Do*, Chapter 3, "Power," [Why Cities Look the Way They Do by Richard J. Williams.pdf](#)

#### IN THE NEWS

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/30/us/philadelphia-chinatown-76ers-arena.html>

### February 20: Module 1 Essay Due – The Pandemic and the Public City

Prompt forthcoming

Preparing for Eric Klinenberg's visit to class

### February 21: The Pandemic and the Public City

#### CLASS

- Eric Klinenberg

#### READINGS

- Klinenberg, Eric, *Palaces for the People*, Chapter 6, "Ahead of the Storm," and Conclusion, "Before We Lift the Next Shovel."
- Klinenberg, Eric, **2020: One City, Seven People, and the Year Everything Changed**, Chapters 13-16 and "Epilogue."

- Williams, Richard J., *Why Cities Look the Way They Do*, Chapter 5, “Work,” [Why Cities Look the Way They Do by Richard J. Williams.pdf](#)

## **Module 2 – Town and Gown: Penn and Its Troubled Legacy**

February 28 – March 27

### **February 28 – Penn and Urban Renewal**

#### DISCUSSION PREPARATION

- Puckett’s history of Penn’s modern era describes how Penn took advantage of existing laws, regulations, and programs in its expansion. In your analysis, how has this contributed to the social mistrust between Penn and the surrounding communities?

#### FIELD TRIP:

- Lancaster Ave

#### READINGS

- Puckett, John, “Penn’s Great Expansion: Postwar Urban Renewal and the Alliance between Private Universities and the Public Sector,
- Wolf-Powers, Laura, *University City: History, Race, and Community in the Era of the Innovation District*, “Introduction,” and “Chap. 1,” pp. 1-42.
- <http://theblackbottom.wordpress.com/archives-2/archives/>
- Baldwin, Davarian, *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower*, Bold Type Books, 2021,” Introduction, Chapters 1, and 2.”

#### IN THE NEWS

- [http://www.philly.com/philly/living/20151127\\_Changing\\_Skyline\\_The\\_ugly\\_story\\_behind\\_Penn\\_s\\_bucolic\\_urban\\_campus.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/living/20151127_Changing_Skyline_The_ugly_story_behind_Penn_s_bucolic_urban_campus.html)
- <https://theblackbottom.wordpress.com/communities/blackbottom/community-displacement/>
- [http://www.philly.com/philly/living/20151127\\_Changing\\_Skyline\\_The\\_ugly\\_story\\_behind\\_Penn\\_s\\_bucolic\\_urban\\_campus.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/living/20151127_Changing_Skyline_The_ugly_story_behind_Penn_s_bucolic_urban_campus.html)
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### **March 13: - The Seventh Ward: Race and Class**

I am away at a meeting on March 13. This is a student-lead tour hosted by students who have taken Amy Hillier’s course on the Seventh Ward. Write ups will be due on Tuesday, March 19.

#### FIELD TRIP –

- W.E.B. Du Bois Seventh Ward Tour

#### READINGS

- W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, pp. 58-70 (ER)
- <http://www.dubois-theward.org/>
- <http://www.dubois-theward.org/resources/documentaries/>



- William Z. Foster, *Pages from a Worker's Life*, pp. 15-18 (ER);
- Dennis Clark, "'Ramcat' and Rittenhouse Square: Related Communities," pp. 125-40, in William Cutler III and Howard Gillette, *The Divided Metropolis: Social and Spatial Dimensions of Philadelphia, 1800-1975* (ER).

#### ASSIGNMENT

- MEET WITH STUDENT GUIDES (Details to be announced before the tour)  
<http://www.dubois-theward.org/resources/walking-tour/locations/>

#### IN THE NEWS

- [http://www.philly.com/philly/columnists/inga\\_saffron/philadelphia-neighborhood-names-graduate-hospital-marian-anderson-20180719.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/columnists/inga_saffron/philadelphia-neighborhood-names-graduate-hospital-marian-anderson-20180719.html)

### **March 20: The Rodin Years: Knitting Town and Gown under Unequal Circumstances**

#### ASSIGNMENT

- The Rodin years were transformative. Dr. Rodin and her team initiated authentic community engagement for the first time in Penn's history. It was by no means perfect. Community engagement cannot correct the power imbalances between an institution of enormous wealth and surrounding less-resourced neighborhoods. Penn is not benevolent but acts in its own self-enlightened interests. Implicit in that last statement is Penn was looking out for its faculty and staff while caring far less for its lower socioeconomic neighbors. Yet, Dr. Rodin and her team understood they must be part of the discussions and must be accommodated in the process. During these years, the national real-estate market was also transformed by enormous amounts of wealth flooding the real estate sector after the tech bust of 2000. The great urban revitalization began. Is there a proper ethical, moral, and economic role that large, urban universities can play in the urban development. Moreover, when an institution of enormous wealth has benefitted enormously from the public sector, what are its moral and ethical obligations to the public sector and specifically the surrounding community.

#### FIELD TRIP:

- Streetcar Suburb – Baltimore to 50<sup>th</sup> St

#### READINGS

- Wolf-Powers, Laura, *University City: History, Race, and Community in the Era of the Innovation District*, "Chap 3," and "Chap. 4," pp. 43-98.
- Baldwin, Davarian, *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower*, Bold Type Books, 2021, "Introduction, Chapters 3 and 4."
- Rodin, Judith, Chapters 5-9, "making the Neighborhood Clean and Safe," "Reclaiming Housing," "Invigorating the Local Economy," and "Investing in Public Education," pp. 59-166.

### **March 26: Module Two Essay Due**

**March 27: The Gutmann Years: MEDS and EDS – Pennsylvania’s Second Largest Private Employer and Philadelphia’s Largest**

DISCUSSION PREPARATION

- Read about PILOTs and Penn’s decision to donate money to the School District of Philadelphia in lieu of paying PILOTs.
- Penn’s relationship to the surrounding neighborhoods and its schools is extremely controversial. In the Graham article in which she describes Penn’s recent decision to financially support the Henry Lea School, she states that, “Despite its contributions, Penn has taken some heat for its role in the community. Penn Alexander gentrified the neighborhood, forcing out some low-income residents and people from University City, and some advocates have pushed hard for Penn not just to provide supports for one or two schools but also for the university to pay payment in lieu of taxes [\(PILOTs\) to benefit the entire district](#), a position Penn has not embraced.”

What role should Penn play in the University City Townhomes controversy given the land, residences, and businesses were taken by eminent domain in the 1960s? What are Penn’s obligations to residents and the community?

FIELD TRIP

- Real Estate Speculation in University City

READINGS

- Wolf-Powers, Laura, *University City: History, Race, and Community in the Era of the Innovation District*, “Chap 4,” and “Conclusion,” pp. 99-150.
- Baldwin, Davarian, *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower*, Bold Type Books, 2021, “Chapters 5, and 6, and Epilogue.”

IN THE NEWS

- Read about the UC Townhomes
- Penn Praxis, 40<sup>th</sup> Street Plan, 2006 and update 2011.

**Module 3 – Urban Revival and Gentrification**

April 3 – April 24

**April 3: Financialization and Gentrification**

ASSIGNMENT

- MODULE TWO ESSAY DUE:  
Take a position on Penn’s obligations to the surrounding community. What role should it play in the University Townhomes Controversy and PILOTs?

FIELD TRIP

- TBA

READINGS

- Weber, Rachel, “Extracting Value from the City,” *Antipode*, 2002, 519-540.
- Hyra Derek, Mindy Fullilove, et al. *Contextualizing Gentrification Chaos: The Rise of the Fifth Wave*,”
- Samuel Stein, Chapter 1, “The Rise of the Real Estate State,” and Chapter 2, “Planning Gentrification,” *Capital City*, 2019, pp 1-90.
- Washington Post, “Investors bought a record share of homes in 2021. See where. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/interactive/2022/housing-market-investors/> (look at map for Philadelphia)

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#### IN THE NEWS

- <https://www.propublica.org/article/when-private-equity-becomes-your-landlord>
- <https://thefederalist.com/2021/06/11/what-happens-when-hedge-funds-buy-up-neighborhoods/>
- <https://www.wsj.com/articles/if-you-sell-a-house-these-days-the-buyer-might-be-a-pension-fund-11617544801>
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/interactive/2022/housing-market-investors/>
- <https://www.phillyvoice.com/philadelphia-real-estate-home-buyer-grants-neighborhood-development-affordable-housing/>
- <https://ideas4development.org/en/financialization-cities/>
- <https://metropolitics.org/Cities-in-the-Age-of-Financialization.html>

#### BROWSE

- Zuk, Miriam, et al, Gentrification, Displacement and the Role of Public Investment: A Literature Review,” Federal Reserve Bank of SF. 2015.

### April 10: Gentrification (cont’d)

#### Society Hill

##### ASSIGNMENT

- TBA

##### FIELD TRIPS

- Society Hill

##### READINGS

- Ammon, Francesca, “Picturing Preservation and Renewal: Photographs as Planning Knowledge in Society Hill, Philadelphia,” *JPER*,
- Jacobs, Jane, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Chapter 15 “Unslumming and Slumming,” pp. 353-379.
- Smith, Neil, Chapter 6, “Market, State, and Ideology,” *The New Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, 1996
- Garvin, Anthony, Society Hill, TBA, *The American City: What Works, What Doesn’t*, (McGraw Hill: 2002)

- Low, Setha, Taplin Dana, and Scheld, Suzanne. *Rethinking Urban Parks*. Chapter 7 “Independence Park”. pp. 175-193.

IN THE NEWS

**April 17      Gentrification: East Passayunk**

FIELD TRIP

- East Passayunk

ASSIGNMENT

- TBA

READINGS

- Sharkey, Patrick, *Uneasy Peace*, Parts 1 and 2
- Dowdell, Emily, Philadelphia’s Changing Neighborhoods, 2016. Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia Research Initiative, 2016.
- Brophy, Paul, “Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods, Penn IUR, 2020.

IN THE NEWS

- <http://planphilly.com/articles/2016/03/07/remaking-sharswood-taking-a-neighborhood-through-eminant-domain-in-the-name-of-transformation>

**April 24:      Gentrification: On the Periphery: Fairmount, Eastern States, Girard, and Sharswood**

ASSIGNMENT

- Module 3 Essay Due  
(There is no prompt. You must develop the question you wish to answer.)

FIELD TRIP

- Sharswood

READINGS

- Sharkey, Patrick, *Uneasy Peace*, Parts 3 Gentrification and its Discontents, and 4. New York
- Freeman, Lance and Jenny Scheutz, “Producing Affordable Housing in Rising Markets”, Penn IUR and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia
- Helmreich, William B. *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles In The City*, 2015, “Introduction,” Chapter2 “Selling Hot Dogs, Planting Flowers, and Living the Dream: New Comers,” and “From Washington Heights to Hudson Heights, from Soho to Soha: Gentrification,” pp 1-71, and 231-295.

IN THE NEWS

- <http://planphilly.com/articles/2016/03/07/remaking-sharswood-taking-a-neighborhooyd-through-eminant-domain-in-the-name-of-transformation>

**May 1: Field Test**

We will take one more field trip to a neighborhood you have not visited. You will be responsible for identifying the patterns and issues that are reflected in the built environment.

### **FINAL PROJECT: THE PHOTOESSAY**

- The Photoessay  
Elaine Simon created this assignment for URBS 203 in 2020.

Create a [photo essay](#) in which you choose a set of images along your walk and tell the design story or depict a theme that characterizes that place.

To come up with that design story/theme, think about what you've read and heard throughout the semester as well as what we have seen on our field trips. Describe how what you observe in the built environment reflects, reveals, and reverberates with what you've learned about the public environment in this course.

Keep in mind that most places have been shaped by a multiplicity of ideas and forces, are not built all at once and therefore have a history, and even if they are built at once (e.g., a suburban development) are rarely pure in their style or intention. They are layered both in terms of ideas and in time. But they aren't completely unplanned or completely haphazard – so that is not a theme that you should consider. The essay should tell what contributed to the way they look, to the spaces you observe to make them the way they are and what planning ideas do they reflect? You may also talk about the social infrastructure and what it contributes to the experience of place. You can note what you like about the place and what you don't like, and why – what would you do to change it, along what lines.

Here are the parameters:

1. Include 5 images. The photos themselves should tell a story.
2. Caption each of the images.
3. Write your essay around the images. No more than 2000 words, including the photo captions.

The guidelines in the link above on how to construct a photo essay should be useful. Here are some examples (just to illustrate form – not content):

[Writing with Light](#) (click on the photo essay tab)

- Williams, Richard J., *Why Cities Look the Way They Do*, “Preface,” Chapter 1 “Introduction,” and Chapter 2, “Money,” pp. 1-51  
SUPPLEMENTARY READING
- Helmreich, William B. *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles In The City*, 2015, “Introduction,” Chapter 2 “Selling Hot Dogs, Planting Flowers, and Living the Dream: New Comers,” and “From Washington Heights to Hudson Heights, from Soho to Soha: Gentrification,” pp 1-71, and 231-295.