

# SOC 2202: Cities & Society

Fall 2019 | Mondays and Wednesdays | 11:40 am – 1:05 pm | VAC Beam Classroom

REVISED: 09/09/19

Professor Theo Greene ([tgreene@bowdoin.edu](mailto:tgreene@bowdoin.edu))  
Office: Adams Hall, Room 310

Pronouns: He/Him/His  
Extension: 5038

Office Hours: By Appointment Only (see below)

Course Website: (<https://courses.bowdoin.edu/sociology-2202-fall-2019/>)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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Cities have always been understood as an endless stream of contradictions, reflecting the many currents of contemporary society. They are highly diverse, yet highly segregated spaces. People seek cities for their unlimited opportunity and resources, yet many who live in cities represent the most economically disadvantaged and socially isolated populations in the world. Cities are destinations where people converge to take advantage of their natural and manmade amenities, yet many also characterize cities as hotbeds of crime and iniquity.

This course investigates some of the major issues in the study and development of cities and their surrounding areas, with a general focus on U.S. cities and a spotlight on neighborhoods and local communities. In addition to studying the major schools of thought pertaining to the social and spatial development of cities, we will consider how the city represents contested sites where institutional actors and residents (local, extra-local, and symbolic) play out broader political, economic, and sociocultural issues through the appropriation of space and the production of its meaning.

This course meets the Experiencing Social Differences (ESD) Requirement for the College. The course aims to develop awareness, understanding and skills of analysis for examining topics such as racial and class-based stratification in cities, how the rise of suburbia influenced the creation and practices of the urban ghetto, the (re)production and defense of authentic culture in ethnic, immigrant, and sexual enclaves (iconic gay and lesbian neighborhoods), the use of “authentic” culture in iconic immigrant and sexual enclaves as amenities in the revitalization of contemporary cities, and how marginalized individuals use cities as important sites of political, economic, and sociocultural resistance, from urban riots to immigration rallies to SlutWalks.

## REQUIRED READINGS

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You may purchase the required readings at the bookstore. Other assigned readings are available electronically on through our class website.

Andrews, Abigail Leslie. 2018. *Undocumented Politics: Place, Gender, and the Pathways of Mexican Migrants*. California: University of California Press ISBN: 9780520299979

Boyles, Andrea S. 2019. *You Can't Stop the Revolution: Community Disorder and Social Ties in Post-Ferguson America*. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520298330

Douglas, Gordon C.C. 2018. *The Help-Yourself City: Legitimacy & Inequality in DIY Urbanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780190691325

Hyra, Derek. 2017. *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 978-0226449531)

Stuart, Forrest. 2016. *Down, Out, and Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 978-0226566207

Vargas, Robert. 2016. *Wounded City: Violent Turf Wars in a Chicago Barrio*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0190245917

Zorbaugh, Harvey. 1927. *The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Social Investigation of Chicago's North Side*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN-13: 978-0226989457

## COURSE FORMAT

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Although this course serves as an introduction to the study of cities and urbanism (assuming no background in urban sociology), there is no “survey” textbook that provides a concise orientation or exegesis of course material. Each class will begin with a “mini-lecture” that situates the material in its sociocultural, political, and economic contexts. We will then collectively discuss assigned readings, anchored by students’ discussion questions. It therefore behooves you to complete all assigned readings before coming to class.

This course has a rather heavy reading load, and, given our “great books” approach to the material, some of the readings may pose a challenge, requiring additional or a closer reading. I do not expect you to read every single word (informed skimming is a vital skill that can prove useful to you in this course); however, I do expect that you have a conversational command of the material. That means, for each of the assigned readings, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What is (are) the motivating question(s) for the reading(s)?
- What is the bottom line/thesis/answer to that motivating question?
- How does the author mobilize his/her evidence? How do they answer the question?
- Is (Are) the author’s answer(s) persuasive? What additional questions do(es) the readings raise for you?

Without proper documentation, no laptops, tablets, and cell phones are allowed. PowerPoint slides will be made available through the course’s website within 48 hours following the lecture.

## METHOD OF EVALUATION

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Your final grade is determined as follows:

Attendance and Informed Participation	10 % of your final grade
The Expert	15 % of your final grade
Two Midterm Essays	30% of your final grade total
Urban Portfolio	45% of your final grade total

## Attendance and Informed Participation

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Attendance and Pop Quizzes

5% of final grade

Blog Responses

5% of final grade

Attendance will be taken for each class and is mandatory. Students who are unable to attend class must notify me in advance and in writing. More than two absences will negatively impact your grade in the course. The only exceptions to the two-absence limit are religious holidays, serious family emergencies, and documented illnesses.

Students are required to complete all assigned readings and come to class actively prepared to critically and analytically engage the material. Informed participation includes making connections between our readings, discussions, and relevant current events; taking an active part in in-class exercises (when applicable), and asking thoughtful questions about readings and lectures. Successful participation in this course depends on both the frequency and quality of a student's contribution to in-class discussions. This does not necessarily mean always providing the right answers, but rather demonstrating an active engagement with the course material and the in-class discussion.

**Pop Quizzes:** I reserve the right to administer random "pop quizzes" throughout the semester to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading. These "pop quizzes" will figure into your participation grade.

**Blog Responses:** Throughout the semester, you are responsible for responding to at least three of the blogs posted by your colleagues on the course's website. A minimum of one response should be completed by the end of the first half of the semester.

## "The Expert"

(15% of final grade total)

Discussion Question (due by noon the day before class)

5% of final grade

I Critical Response Blogs

10% of final grade

To facilitate our discussions, each student will sign up for one class during the semester in which s/he/they will be "the expert." For the classes you select as "the expert," you are responsible for the following:

- You will draft one discussion question based on the readings for that particular class. Questions should extend beyond basic "comprehension questions," tying specific aspects of the reading to dominant themes for that particular class. You can also draft questions that compare readings to previous discussions in class. The readings should be emailed to Professor Greene ([tgreene@bowdoin.edu](mailto:tgreene@bowdoin.edu)) by noon the day before your assigned class in order that your questions can be added to the lecture slides. Additionally, you may also be called upon during our discussion to offer commentary about the readings for that particular day.
- Within a week of your assigned "Expert" Day, you are to post a blog (between 500 – 750 words) on the course's website (<https://courses.bowdoin.edu/sociology-2202-fall-2019/>) that connects the course readings with key themes introduced in lecture or during class discussion. The goal of these blogs is not to summarize the readings (although a brief summary might be necessary), but rather to think about any lingering questions that the material raises for you, or to consider ideas presented in class or in the readings that merit further consideration. You are also welcome to situate the readings for your day in conversation with other theories or empirical studies we have explored in the class.

<b>Midterm Essays</b>	30% of your final grade
Midterm Essay 1 (due by 5 pm on <b>Friday, October 18</b> )	15% of your final grade
Midterm Essay 2 (due by 5 pm on <b>Friday, November 15</b> )	15% of your final grade

You will write one 4 to 6-page midterm paper, answering a question provided one week in advance of your paper's due date (no later than Friday, October 18 and Friday, November 17). Papers are designed to demonstrate your comprehension of the course material and will likely require you to engage multiple theories simultaneously.

<b>FINAL PROJECT: Urban Portfolio</b>	45% of your final grade
Profile (due by 5 pm on <b>Friday, September 27</b> )	10% of your final grade
Prospectus (due by 5 pm on <b>Friday, November 1</b> )	10% of your final grade
Urban Issue or Cultural Analysis (due by 11:30 am on <b>Saturday, December 21</b> )	25% of your final grade

A persistent debate in urban sociology concerns how the demands of contemporary life have disconnected residents from the neighborhoods and communities in which they live. For your final assignment, you will be asked to draw on themes from this course to describe and analyze the cultural, social, and political dynamics of a neighborhood/community in your hometown (city, suburb, village, town) that fits one of the following criteria: (a) your local neighborhood/community (where you currently live), (b) a former neighborhood/community (where you once lived), or (c) a symbolic neighborhood/community (a neighborhood or community where you are not a resident, but you nevertheless feel a strong personal identification to the area's community). The project is to be completed in three parts:

**Place Profile** (due by 5 pm on Friday, September 27) 10% of your final grade

Your first paper is a brief profile (4 – 6 pages) of your neighborhood and community, drawing from resources introduced through our “Studying the City Workshop” (September 18). Your paper should offer an analysis of your community's demographic characteristics, brief history of the neighborhood, and a brief discussion of your own relationship to the neighborhood community (how long have you “lived” there; what qualities attracted you to this neighborhood as a former, local, or symbolic resident, etc.). More instructions to follow.

**Urban Issue or Cultural Analysis**

Prospectus (due by 5 pm on Friday, November 1)	10% of your final grade
Final Paper (due by 11:30 am on Saturday, December 21)	25% of your final grade

For the second paper, you will write a 10 – 12-page paper that address one of the following prompts:

- (a) Select a salient urban issue that your community is currently facing (or has faced within the last five years). Drawing on at least five media sources (newspapers, local blogs, etc), you will address the following questions: (1) What is the issue you are addressing (context/background) and why is this an “urban issue”? (2) Is the issue contentious, and if so, what is the debate and who are the key parties involved? (3) How is the issue being handled in the neighborhood and what critique(s) do you have of how the issue is being handled? (4) What have you learned in the class that helps you better understand the issue or place it in the context (you will need to draw on at least three of the course readings to answer the final question)?

- (b) What gives your neighborhood its cultural identity? What institutions/events embody the spirit of your neighborhood? What amenities would attract outsiders to your neighborhood/community? This final paper offers a cultural analysis of the neighborhood, anchored around a cultural event/place/phenomenon that you believe best defines the identity character of the neighborhood. You may select any venue that takes place within the boundaries of the neighborhood (festival, tourist attraction, local institution, parade, rally, natural space). This paper will be a 10 – 12 page discussion that accomplishes the following: (1) provides a broad overview of the neighborhood’s identity, highlighting a few examples that best embody that identity; (2) provides a discussion of your selected site (history, why this site best embodies the identity of your neighborhood/community), drawing on at least five outside sources; (3) offers a snapshot of the functions and activities that take place at this event/site; and (4) discusses what you have learned in class that helps illuminate the dynamics taking place there.

By 5 p.m. on **Friday, November 1**, you will submit a three-page prospectus of your final project. This prospectus will provide an overview of your research project (whether it is an urban issue or a cultural analysis), questions which may guide your research project, and a description of the data you will be mobilizing to address your question. You should also include some of the course readings which may inform your specific project. This prospectus provides you the chance to receive feedback from the professor for the final project. The prospectus counts for **10% of your final grade**.

Your final paper constitutes **25% of your final grade**. When submitting your final paper, you must clearly indicate which of the two prompts you will be addressing by titling your paper “URBAN ISSUE” (for prompt A) or “CULTURAL ANALYSIS” (for prompt B). Failure to do so will result in an automatic grade reduction (e.g. from an A- to a B+).

*NB: All papers must be submitted via One Drive in a Word Processing Format (e.g. Word, Pages, or Google Docs). PDFs are not acceptable (and submitting a PDF will be penalized as a late paper).*

**GRADING SCALE**

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*NB: I eschew rounding up borderline grades (e.g. rounding an 89.5 (B+) to a 90 (A-)). In these cases, I reserve the right to round up or round down based on a student’s overall performance in the course (participation, consistent performance or signs of improvement over the semester).*

	A:	93% – 100%	A-:	90% – 92%
B+:	B:	84% – 86%	B-:	80% – 83%
C+:	C:	74% – 76%	C-:	70% – 73%
	D:	64 % – 69%		
	F:	below 64%		

**ABOUT MY AVAILABILITY**

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I do not maintain a consistent set of office hours. To maximize availability, I use an online calendar. You can access my calendar through the course’s Blackboard site, the course’s webpage (see above), and through Bowdoin faculty page (<https://www.bowdoin.edu/profiles/faculty/tgreene/>).

To check my availability and to schedule a meeting time, please visit my website and sign up for no more than two, consecutive 15-minute slots (30 minutes maximum), depending on the estimate of how much time you need. If you need to cancel an appointment, you can only do so through the website. There is no need to

send me a confirmation of the appointment you make of the cancellation; the system automatically generates an email notifying me of this information.

During midterms and finals, I offer additional office hours. Days and times for supplemental hours will be announced in advance.

### A WORD ABOUT ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to abide by the College's Academic Honor Code. The honor code is located in the student handbook.

### STUDENTS SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities seeking accommodation must provide documentation to Lesley Levy, Director of Accommodations for Students with Disabilities ([llevy@bowdoin.edu](mailto:llevy@bowdoin.edu)). Students are encouraged to address any special needs or special accommodations at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs.

Additional information regarding the accommodations process for students with disabilities is available at <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/special-accommodations/index.html>. All information will remain confidential.

### COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

*NB: The professor reserves the right to adjust, eliminate, or substitute readings on this list to accommodate the intellectual needs of the class. Students will ALWAYS be advised of changes in class and in writing no later than 48 hours in advance.*

*\*denotes readings available through our course website.*

#### WEEK ONE

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

4 September

Introduction to the Course (and the City)  
Review of the Syllabus (NO READING)

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#### WEEK TWO

#### CLASSICAL THEORIES OF URBANISM

9 September

Classical Approaches to the City  
Zorbaugh, Harvey. 1927. *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, Chs. 3 – 5, 9

\*Simmel, Georg. [1902 – 3]. “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (pp. 324 – 339) in *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*. Donald N. Levine, ed. (1975). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

11 September

The Chicago School  
Zorbaugh, Harvey. 1927. *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, Chs. 1 – 2, 7 – 8

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### WEEK THREE

### THE RISE OF THE GHETTO

16 September

#### Urban Policy and the Rise of the Suburb

\*Gans, Herbert. 1967. "Social Life: Suburban Homogeneity and Conformity" (pp. 153 – 184) in *The Levittowners: Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community*.

\*Jackson, Kenneth. 1985. "Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream: How Washington Changed the American Housing Market" (pp. 190 – 208), "The Baby Boom and the Age of the Subdivision" (pp. 231 – 245) in *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.

18 September

#### Studying the City – Laboratory

Visit by Beth Hoppe, Social Sciences Research & Instruction Librarian  
*Bring your laptops to class!*

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### WEEK FOUR

### THE PERSISTENCE OF THE GHETTO

23 September

#### The Roots of Racial Segregation

\*DuBois, W.E.B. 1899. "Social Classes and Amusements," (pp. 309 – 321) in *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

\*Massey, Douglas and Nancy Denton. 1993. "The Missing Link" (pp. 1 – 16) and "The Construction of the Ghetto" (pp. 17 – 59) in *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the American Underclass*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

25 September

#### Urban Poverty and the Persistence of Segregation

\*Sharkey, Patrick. 2013. "The Inheritance of the Ghetto," (pp. 24 – 46), "Neighborhoods and the Transmission of Racial Inequality" (pp. 91 – 116) and "The Cross-Generational Legacy of Urban Disadvantage" (pp. 117 – 135) in *Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress Toward Racial Equality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

27 September

Community Profile due by 5 pm via email One Drive.

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### WEEK FIVE

### RACE AND PLACE

30 September

#### The Survival Strategies of Working-Class Whites

\*Sherman, Jennifer. 2009. "The Place I Found: An Introduction to Golden Valley" (pp. 25 – 54) and "Workers and Welfare: Poverty, Coping Strategies, and Substance Abuse (pp. 55 – 100) in *Those Who Work, Those Who Don't: Poverty, Morality, and Family in Rural America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

2 October

Race and Place in a "Post-racial" Era

\*Lung-Amam, Willow S. 2017. "The New Gold Mountain" (pp. 19 – 52) and "A Quality Education for Whom?" (pp. 53 – 97) in *Trespassers? Asian Americans and the Battle of Suburbia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

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## WEEK SIX

## CRIME, CRIMINALITY, AND COMMUNITY EFFICACY

7 October

Crime and Policing

Forrest Stuart. 2016. *Down, Out, and Under Arrest*, Introduction, Part I

9 October

Policing the Police/Surveillance

Stuart, Forrest. 2016. *Down, Out, and Under Arrest*, Part II

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## WEEK SEVEN

## COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO POLICING

14 October

Fall Break – No Reading

16 October

Community Responses to Criminality

Vargas, Robert. 2015. *Wounded City: Violent Turf Wars in a Chicago Barrio*.

18 October

Midterm paper due by 5 pm via One Drive.

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## WEEK EIGHT

## MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

21 October

Theories of Migration and Immigration

Guest Lecture by Marcelle Medford, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Bates College

23 October

Andrews, Abigail. 2018. *Undocumented Politics*, Introduction, Ch. 1, 3

Constructing the "Local" Transnationally

Andrews, Abigail. 2018. *Undocumented Politics*, Ch. 2, 4 – 5

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## WEEK NINE

## CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY

28 October

The Political Economy of the City



\*Logan, John R., and Harvey Molotch." [1987] 2007. "The City as a Growth Machine" (pp. 50 – 98) in *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

\*Loughran, Kevin. 2014. "Parks for Profit: The High Line, Growth Machines, and the Uneven Development of Urban Spaces." *City & Community* 13(1): 5 – 32.

30 October

The City by Way of Los Angeles

\*Centner, Ryan. 2008. "Places of Privileged Consumption Practices: Spatial Capital, the Dot-Com Habitus, and San Francisco's Internet Boom." *City & Community* 7(3): 193 – 223.

\*Kidder, Jeffrey L. 2017. "Introduction: Thinking Sociologically about Parkour" (pp. 1 – 17), "New Prisms of the Possible" (pp. 47 – 69), and "Conclusions: Appropriating the City" (pp. 128 – 141) in *Parkour and the City: Risk, Masculinity, and Meaning in a Postmodern Sport*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

I November

Final Project Prospectus due by 5 pm

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WEEK TEN:

**GENTRIFICATION AND THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS**

4 November

Making Sense of Gentrification

Hyra, Derek. 2017. *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*, Chs. 1 – 3

6 November

Cultural Gentrification and the Rise of the Creative Class

Hyra, Derek. 2017. *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*, Chs. 4, 6, 7-8.

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WEEK ELEVEN:

**PLACEMAKING AND THE PRODUCTION OF CULTURE IN THE POSTMODERN CITY**

11 November

(Re)Producing Culture in the Postmodern City

\*Ocejo, Richard E. 2017. "Preface: The Daily Grind" (pp. xi – xxi), "Introduction. A Stroll through the Market" (pp. 1 – 22), "Distilling Authenticity" (pp. 50 – 75), and "How Middle-Class Kids Want Working Class Jobs" (pp. 129 – 158) in *Masters of Craft: Old Jobs in the New Urban Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

13 November

The Tourist City

\*Wynn, Jonathan. 2015. "Introduction: City and Stage" (pp. 1 – 20), "The Unlikely Rise in Importance of American Music Festivals" (pp. 21 – 44), and "Part-Time Indie Music Club "South by Southwest" (pp. 125 – 166) in

*Music/City: American Festivals and Placemaking in Austin, Nashville, and Newport.*  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

15 November

Midterm paper due by 5 pm via One Drive.

WEEK TWELVE:

SEXUALITY AND THE CITY

18 November

There Goes the Gayborhood!

Orne, Jason. 2017. "Gay Disneyland" (pp. 111 – 122), "One of the Good Guys" (pp. 131 – 151), "Straight to Halsted" (pp. 152 – 168) and "Girldown" (pp. 169 – 185) in *Boystown: Sex and Community in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

\*Brown-Saracino, Japonica. 2011. "From the Lesbian Ghetto to Ambient Community: The Perceived Costs and Benefits of Integration for Community." *Social Problems* 58(3): 361 – 388.

\*Doan, Petra. 2010. "The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces – Reflections from Beyond the Gender Dichotomy." *Gender, Place, and Culture* 17(5): 635 – 54.

20 November

There Goes the Gayborhood?

\*Stillwagon, Ryan and Amin Ghaziani. 2019. "Queer Pop-Ups: A Cultural Innovation in Urban Life." *City & Community*.

Symposium on Queer Urbanisms. *City & Community*.

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WEEK THIRTEEN:

GENDER POLITICS AND THE GLOBAL CITY

25 November

Gender Politics and the City

\*Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2015. "The Contemporary Sex Industry" (pp. 39 – 52), "New Hierarchies of Global Men" (pp. 53 – 77), and "Sex Workers Economic Trajectories" (pp. 154- 172) in *Dealing in Desire: Asian Ascendancy, Western Decline, and the Hidden Currencies of Global Sex Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

27 November

THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS

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WEEK FOURTEEN:

INSURGENT URBANISMS

2 December

Creating Alternate Practices

\*Douglas, Gordon C.C. 2018. *The Help Yourself City*, Chs. 2 – 3, 6

4 December

"Pathology" as a Creative Force

\*Douglas, Gordon. C.C. 2018. *The Help Yourself City*, Ch. 5

\*Greene, Theodore. 2018. "Queer Street Families: Place-making and Community Among LGBT Youth of Color in Iconic Gay Neighborhoods." (pp. 168 – 181) in *After Marriage: The Future of LGBT Research and Scholarship, Vol. 1: Queer Families and Relationships After Marriage*. Michael Yarborough, Angela Jones, and Joseph Nicholas DeFilippis, eds. New York: Routledge.

\*Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette and Jose Miguel Ruiz. 2014. "‘Illegality’ and Spaces of Sanctuary: Belonging and Homeland Making in Urban Community Gardens" (pp. 246 – 271) in *Constructing Immigrant Illegality: Critiques, Experiences, and Responses*, Cecilia Menjivar and Daniel Kanstroom, eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.

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**WEEK FIFTEEN:**

**URBAN MOVEMENTS**

9 December

Boyles, Andrea S. 2019. *You Can't Stop the Revolution: Community Disorder and Social Ties in Post-Ferguson America*, Chs. 1 – 3.

11 December

Boyles, Andrea S. 2019. *You Can't Stop the Revolution: Community Disorder and Social Ties in Post-Ferguson America*, Chs. 4 - 6.

**NOTE: FINAL PAPERS SUBMITTED BY ONE DRIVE BY 11:30 AM ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21.**