



<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-KPe1gP6FIOA/UBoSHtdVn-I/AAAAAAAAAGuo/g-2FiLVjf0o/s640/The+Burbs+Pub+1a.jpg>

## **CDNS 3600**

### **Cultural Politics and Identities in Canada**

#### **Theme for 2016: *Constructing Suburban Identities***

Instructor: Jerzy (Jurek) Elżanowski

Location: RB 1201

Time: Wednesdays, 14:35-17:25

Office hours by appointment (1203 Dunton Tower)

Email: [jerzy.elzanowski@carleton.ca](mailto:jerzy.elzanowski@carleton.ca)

Web: <http://carleton.ca/canadianstudies/people/jerzy-jurek-elzanowski/>

**This course proposes an architectural and material culture lens for the study of historical and contemporary suburban identities in Canada and abroad. It uses a rich literature on domesticity, gender, ethnicity, and place, challenging suburban and urban students to consider how studying space and materiality can contribute to an understanding of urban/suburban identities.**

Do you go for coffee to Tim Horton's in Barrhaven? In Kanata, do you *drive* to the nearest 'convenience' store? Did you first hear the footsteps of strangers only when you moved away from Orléans? What is it about the materiality of suburbs that makes them different from dense urban centres? Is it the pavement, the lighting, the quality of planted surfaces? Or perhaps it's the unexpected churches, homes, and their decorations that reflect growing ethnic diasporas and diaspora religions? Is there something particular about the planning of suburban Indigenous communities?

We know that suburban sprawl requires vast infrastructures that serve relatively few people, and that suburbs contribute to an overuse of natural resources and effectively to climate change. We also know that, since World War Two, Canadian and American corporations and government institutions have consciously and, to a degree effectively, positioned suburbs as incubators for a white, male- and car-dominated society. But suburbia isn't going away anytime soon. Acknowledging this, authors are beginning to give agency to suburbanites, to question past assumptions about male-female power dynamics, to describe the heterogeneous ethnic and formal nature of sprawl, and to study suburban communities as incubators of art rather than of desperation.

The course is divided into three main parts: Part I, MOVEMENT\_BODY\_GAZE, talks about the environmental and the domestic bodies of suburbia: how we move through, view and thus experience the suburban home and the spaces of commerce and transportation that surround it. The second part, HISTORY\_MORPHOLOGY TYPOLOGY, reviews literature on the origins and evolution of suburbia in Europe and Canada. The third part, EXILE\_DISPLACEMENT\_MIGRATION, addresses suburbia as a space of diaspora communities and diaspora architectures – themes that are often ignored in morphological studies of suburbs.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Please note that this is a DRAFT schedule.** Discussion topics or dates of class workshops *may change* during the course of the semester as we determine the areas of our joint interests and assess the progress of our work. All changes to the schedule will be announced in class. If you have missed a class, please contact the instructor or one of your colleagues to confirm the readings for the week. **Readings will be available through the library, on ARES, or on cuLearn.**

## **PART I: DEFINITIONS**

### **Class 1: 06/01/16**

**Introductory Class (discussion of course outline and objectives)**

### **Class 2: 13/01/16**

**What is 'cultural identity' in the suburban context?**

Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 224-227.

Lionel Frost, "The History of American Cities and Suburbs," *Journal of Urban History* 27, no. 3 (March 1, 2001): 362-76.

### **Class 3: 20/01/16**

**Defining Suburbia**

Ann Forsyth, "Defining Suburbs," *Journal of Planning Literature* 27, no. 3 (2012): 270-81.

Richard Harris and Robert Lewis, "The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs," *Journal of Urban History* 27 (2001): 262-284.

Robert Bruegmann, "Early Sprawl," in *Sprawl a Compact History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 21-32.

**Assignments 1 and 2 announced**

### **Class 4: 27/01/16**

**Creative lab/assignment development**

*No Readings*

## **PART II: BODY\_MOVEMENT\_GAZE**

### **Class 5: 03/02/16**

**The domestic body: Politics of space in the suburban bungalow**

Annmarie Adams, "The Eichler Home: Intention and Experience in Postwar Suburbia," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 5 (January 1, 1995): 164–78.

Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945–60," *Canadian Historical Review* 72, no. 4 (December 1, 1991): 471–504.

Gwendolyn Wright, Introduction to *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1983).

**Assignment 1 due (before class, 2:00pm) // brief presentations this and next class**

**Class 6: 10/02/16**

**The environmental body: Inhabiting the spaces in-between**

Roger Keil and Douglas Young, "Introduction: In-Between Canada-The Emergence of the New Urban Middle," in *In-Between Infrastructure: Urban Connectivity in an Age of Vulnerability*, ed. Douglas Young, Patricia Burke Wood, and Roger Keil (Praxis E Press, 2011), 1–18.

Richard Harris, "Using Toronto to explore three suburban stereotypes" *Environment and Planning A* 47, no. 1 (2014): 30-49.

Amanda Wise, "Sensuous Multiculturalism: Emotional Landscapes of Inter-Ethnic Living in Australian Suburbia," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 6 (2010): 917–37.

**Presentations continued from previous class**

**Winter Break: 15/02/16 - 19/02/16**

**Class 7: 24/02/16**

**Assignment 2 due (before class, 2:00pm) // class presentations // workshops //**

**Assignment 3 announced**

*No Readings*

### **Class 8: 02/03/16**

#### **Viewing from above: War, reconstruction and the shift to planned suburban environments**

Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (London, 1902). The Book can be **found here**: <http://urbanplanning.library.cornell.edu/DOCS/howard.htm>

Jeffery Diefendorf, Wartime Planning in Boston, in *A Blessing in Disguise: War and Town Planning in Europe, 1940-1945*, ed. Jorn Duwel and Niels Gutschow, (Berlin: Dom Publishers, 2013), 346-361.

Nathalie Roseau, "The City Seen from The Aeroplane: Distorted Reflections and Urban Futures" in *Seeing from above: The Aerial View in Visual Culture*, ed. Mark Dorrian and Frédéric Pousin, (I.B. Tauris, 2013), 210-226.

### **Class 9: 09/03/16**

#### **Suburban exile and the Racialization of Space**

Brian K. Ray, Greg Halseth, and Benjamin Johnson, "The Changing 'Face' of the Suburbs: Issues of Ethnicity and Residential Change in Suburban Vancouver," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 21, no. 1 (1997): 75-99.

David G. Burley, "Rooster Town: Winnipeg's Lost Mitis Suburb, 1900-1960," *Urban History Review* 42, no. 1 (2013): 3-26.

### **Class 10: 16/03/16**

#### **No Class // Assignment 3 development**

*Please block off the full class time to meet with your working group. Each group will need to produce a 300-word progress report that will contribute to the participation grade.*

## **PART III: EXILE\_DISPLACEMENT\_MIGRATION**

### **Class 11: 23/03/16**

#### **Conflict and marginalization**

Richard Harris and Doris Forrester, "The Suburban Origins of Redlining: A Canadian Case Study, 1935-54," *Urban Studies* 40, no. 13 (December 1, 2003): 2661-86

Thomas J. Sugrue, "Detroit's Time Bomb: Race and Housing in the 1940s," in *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Nicholas Hune-Brown, "#TorontolsFailingMe," *Toronto Life*,  
<http://torontolife.com/toronto-is-failing-me/>

## **Class 12: 30/03/16**

### **Destabilizing suburbia: art and semantics**

Readings TBA; Please browse: <https://www.tumblr.com/search/art%20and%20suburbia>

### **Assignment 3 due (before class, 2:00pm) // Assignment 3 presentations**

## **Class 13: 06/04/16**

### **Concluding class // Assignment 3 presentations continued**

## **Assignments, Readings, and Evaluation**

With the help of their peers, students will document Ottawa's suburbs using methods that cross over and dispute disciplinary boundaries: poetry, song and essay writing, photography, film, mapping or freehand drawing (Assignment 1). Students will then interpret this documentation and propose a physical intervention that unsettles a suburban space of their choice (Assignment 3). Each student will also have to propose and document a week-long personal challenge (Assignment 2). This may include bussing rather than driving to work or exchanging urban / suburban apartments with a classmate or family member. *The assignments are flexible and students with disabilities will be accommodated.*

The goal of the assignments is to encourage students to undertake research that will help raise public awareness of key problems in the 'suburbia' debate. In order to make time for a wide range of individual and group assignments, the readings for each class will be limited to two articles. However, students are expected to read each article closely and to use specific excerpts in class discussions. Required readings are listed in the Class Schedule; additional readings can be found in the attached bibliography. **I will hand out a detailed description of each assignment in class. This description will include a breakdown of tasks, instructions on how to proceed with each task, and a**

**summary of the how each project will be graded.** We will talk about assignments in detail and modify tasks to accommodate individual and class research goals.

Rather than regular rounds of presentations, students will present their work throughout the semester as needed. **Starting in the third week of the course, groups of four students will be asked to lead the classroom discussion on a selected reading (please see additional “Course Objectives” handout).** Two students will be responsible for summarizing the main arguments and claims made in the literature; the other two students will act as respondents. Respondents will critically assess the arguments presented and suggest alternative readings. The whole group will be responsible for preparing questions and generating discussions on the readings. In addition, I've scheduled three “creative lab” days when we will hold informal workshops and presentations related to the assignments. The participation grade will reflect the overall quality of intellectual engagement throughout the semester.

Throughout the semester I will randomly administer 3-4 in-class “pop-five-minute essays” that will help me gauge reading competency and levels of critical thinking. Students will be asked to write a one-page summary of assigned readings and suggest a critical perspective. The essays will form part of the participation grade. You will not be given written feedback on these essays. You may miss one pop-essay without penalty.

Assignments are weighted in the following way:

Class Participation (including literature summaries, class discussions, and “five-minute essays”): 25%

Assignment 1 – Initial documentation of a chosen suburb: 15%

Assignment 2 – Journal of personal challenge: 25%

Assignment 3 – Physical intervention in the suburban environment: 35%

**Preliminary submission deadlines (subject to modification):**

Assignment 1 – 03/02/16

Assignment 2 – 24/02/16

Assignment 3 – 30/03/16

**Late assignments will not be accepted or marked.** If you need an extension for medical reasons, including mental health concerns, because of pregnancy, a religious obligation, or if you have any other concerns about the assignment deadlines, please speak to me as soon as possible. **Last minute extensions will not be granted. Late submissions will receive zero points. Assignments will close on cuLearn at 2:10pm sharp.** There will be no possibility to submit your assignment after this deadline, so please make sure to give yourself plenty of time to navigate the system.

### **Excursions and guest lectures**

I may propose excursions: art exhibitions, public lectures, or tours of Ottawa come to mind. These will be optional. Guest lecturers who are specialists in particular sub-fields of Canadian urban studies may come and speak as opportunities arise.

### **Research Assistance**

The Library website maintains a webpage related to Canadian Studies. The reference contact for Canadian Studies questions is Martha Attridge Bufton 613-520-2600 x2985.

### **Academic Integrity**

*The following texts are part of Carleton's academic integrity and equity policies.*

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a very serious academic offence. It occurs when someone tries to pass anyone else's work as their own. It occurs when a student either a) directly copies more than one or two sentences of another's written work without acknowledgement; or b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgement; and c) borrows, without acknowledgement, any ideas in a clear and recognized form, in such a way, as to present them as the student's own thoughts, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her work.

Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Department Chair, who will refer the case to the Dean. Students are reminded that plagiarism can result in a range of penalties including failure in the course. It is in the student's best interests to keep all of their research papers intact after handing in papers.

**Resubmission of Work:** Prior approval of the instructor must be obtained if you intend to submit work that has previously or concurrently been submitted, in whole or in part, for credit in any other course.

For more details see the Academic Integrity Policy  
<http://www1.carleton.ca/senate/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

### **Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:



**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at:  
<http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

## **Additional Readings**

*This is a list of additional readings you may find useful. It is not in alphabetical order, but rather reflects the chronological progression of ideas in the course. Most of these readings are available on ARES.*

Gillen D'Arcy Wood, "Leigh Hunt's New Suburbia: An Eco-Historical Study in Climate Poetics and Public Health," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 18, no. 3 (December 1, 2011): 527–52.

Marc Chrysanthou, "The Commuter's 'Experience' of Poverty: A Time-Geographical Perspective on Health and Illness," *Journal of Poverty* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 41–63.

Tim Edensor, "Mundane Hauntings: Commuting through the Phantasmagoric Working-Class Spaces of Manchester, England," *Cultural Geographies* 15, no. 3 (July 1, 2008): 313–33.

Tim Cresswell, "The Prosthetic Citizen: New Geographies of Citizenship," *Political Power and Social Theory* 20 (January 2009): 259–73.

Caroline Andrew, "Connectivity and Vulnerability: Gender and The Local Politics of Infrastructure," in *In-Between Infrastructure: Urban Connectivity in an Age of Vulnerability*, ed. Douglas Young, Patricia Burke Wood, and Roger Keil (Praxis E Press, 2011), 197–207.

Michael J. Doucet and John C. Weaver, "Material Culture and the North American House: The Era of the Common Man, 1870-1920," *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 3 (1985): 560–87.

Galina Tachieva, *Sprawl Repair Manual* (Washington: Island Press, 2010).

Robert Bruegmann, *Sprawl a Compact History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Brian K. Ray, Greg Halseth, and Benjamin Johnson, "The Changing 'Face' of the Suburbs: Issues of Ethnicity and Residential Change in Suburban Vancouver," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 21, no. 1 (1997): 75–99.

Elizabeth Christine Lista, "Encountering Multiculturalism in Suburban Ontario: Sacred Hindu Space, Citizenship and Canadian Multiculturalism" (McGill University Libraries, 2011).

Carolyn Whitzman, *Suburb, Slum, Urban Village: Transformations in Toronto's Parkdale Neighbourhood, 1875-2002* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

Leigh Gallagher, *The End of the Suburbs: Where the American Dream Is Moving* (Penguin, 2013).

Alison L. Bain, *Creative Margins: Cultural Production in Canadian Suburbs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).