

CHID BERLIN, FALL 2011
The City as Media: Space, Memory and the Urban Landscape
Instructors: Prof. John Toews (toews@u.washington.edu)
and Naraelle Hohensee (naraelle@gmail.com)
September 28 – December 16, 2011

Course Description:

In the course of just a century, Berlin has been the site of catastrophic destruction, tragic division, intensive rebuilding and vehement debates over memory and memorialization. A decade ago it was Europe's largest construction site. What remains? Have the layers of history exposed by the fall of the Berlin Wall been obscured by new structures? What memories can still be read in the urban landscape? Through two interlocking seminar courses, Modern European History 406 ("The City as Historical Text") and CHID 470 ("The City as Media"), our aim will be to discover and decode some of the innumerable layers of memory that remain present and alive in the city's landscape. A third course (CHID 498) will consist of an independent student project that helps you reflect on and make connections between themes in the seminar courses and your experience of the city itself.

HSTEU 406: The City as Historical Text

Prof. John Toews

This course will examine the ways in which physical, built environments and, more generally, visual and spatial relations operate in fashioning stories of civic, national, imperial, ethnic and religious identification. How does the experience of the city guide the individual to insert his/her life into a public, collective story? How have designers and citizens translated their social and political visions into the cityscape? How has the construction of the city excluded or marginalized certain groups, like workers or ethnic minorities? Must there be a dominant identity? How does the "construction" of the past work in shaping present identities? Can the city operate like a historical text? How do we organize and test our readings of this text? How far should we trust our guidebooks? Do they impose certain readings on us?

CHID 470: The City as Media

Naraelle Hohensee

Building on the idea of the city as historical text, this class will examine how urban spaces themselves, as well as representations of those spaces, mediate the relationships between individuals and their social environment. Beginning with the idea of architecture as "media," we will explore how the built environment acts, just like other media such as TV and advertising, as both a shaper of subjectivity and as a screen for our own personal and contingent narratives. Taking the city as our laboratory, the class will use analytical methods from the disciplines of anthropology, visual culture and media studies to document and explore the threads of historical memory that exist within the city's built contours. In the process, students will learn the techniques of visual analysis and ethnography, they will become acquainted with issues of media ethics and contemporary discourses concerning space and memory, and they will learn about both the visual culture and the tumultuous history of Berlin itself.

CHID 498: Independent Project

In this course, students will complete independent projects based on their experience of the urban landscape of Berlin. The project will consist of a weekly blog that incorporates visual media, participation in weekly project workshops, and a final media project.

Although these courses are listed as three separate components, in practice they will be approached and completed as a holistic unit. This means that the grade you receive in one course will likely be reflected in the others.

Course Website & Contact Information

All of the important information for this course, including instructor contact info, the syllabus, schedule and links to the readings, is available on our course website:

<http://courses.washington.edu/berlin11/> (A UW NetID is required in order to access the site.)

Our email addresses are:

John Toews: toews@u.washington.edu

Nara Hohensee: narabelle@gmail.com

Chance Hohensee: chancerh@gmail.com

Office hours will generally be held on Thursdays after class, or by appointment.

Optional German Conversation Group

On Friday mornings, Chance will be holding an optional German tutorial session for those of you who either don't know German, or want to brush up. He'll be covering useful vocabulary and cultural topics that will help you in your everyday life here in Berlin. This is a no-pressure group that is meant to ease your transition into Berlin life – we recommend that you take advantage of this great resource. The group will meet for an hour or two on Fridays for the first 6 weeks of the course, with an option to continue if you decide to do so as a group.

Assignments & Grading

General Guidelines

You will need a laptop and a digital camera for this course. A cell phone camera will do, but you need to be able to easily transfer images from your phone's camera to your computer. If you do not have this equipment, let us know as soon as possible so we can help you make arrangements.

All papers should be double-spaced, in Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Since you don't have easy access to a printer, you may email them to us (email them to both John and Nara, please) or you may bring them to class on a USB key. **They should be submitted in .doc or .docx format, or (if you don't have Microsoft Word) in .rtf format.** (Please don't send us .pages or other types of files; we won't be able to read them.)

Your papers should be spell-checked. There is no excuse for not doing this. You should also proofread your paper thoroughly before turning it in. The best way to do this is to read it out loud to yourself.

Assignments are due on the day indicated in the course schedule. Late assignments drop by one letter grade immediately if they are late, and another per additional week.

PLAGIARISM POLICY: Plagiarism of any kind – from the smallest part of a sentence copied from the Internet to a completely plagiarized paper – simply will NOT BE TOLERATED and will result in your immediately failing the course. DO NOT COPY THINGS OFF OF THE INTERNET. If you use a piece of writing that you found in a book, the course reader, or on the Web, you must put it in quotes and cite it properly. We will be using plagiarism proofing software in the course. You will be caught if you plagiarize.

Your final grade will be based on the following elements:

Weekly reading response papers (30%)

Group-led site visit (10%)

Weekly ethnographic photoblog (20%)

Final visual ethnography project (15%)

Final paper (20%)

Class participation (5%) (Note: per UW Study Abroad policy, you're required to attend all classes and activities. There are no allowed absences unless you are ill.)

Weekly reading response papers (30% of your grade)

For weeks 2 – 9 of the course, you will be expected to submit a weekly 1½ – 3 page response paper based on the assigned readings for the week. The paper should demonstrate that you have completed the reading and should constitute a thoughtful response to the problems posed in it. Response papers will usually be due on Tuesdays. (See schedule for details.)

For the Thursday readings, you are responsible to bring three written questions to class. They should address the readings assigned for that day. Try to make them as thoughtful as possible – we will use your questions to structure our discussion. They may be handwritten, but they must be **handed in** during class.

Submission and grading: Unless otherwise noted, the response papers will be due by the beginning of the Tuesday seminar each week. Your papers will be graded on their thoughtfulness, organization and grammar. You will hand in your questions during class on Thursdays, and they'll be graded on content.

Group-led site visit (10% of your grade)

This is a small group research project designed to help the class experience and learn about the history of the most important monuments and sites in the city. Each week, a group of 2-3 students will lead a visit to one of the sites in the list below. (Groups and sites will be assigned during Week 1.)

Requirements: The group is responsible for researching the site and giving the class a tour of its most important aspects, including an explanation of its history. The tour should last at least 45 minutes and be no longer than 2 hours long. In order to be successful, your group should visit the site on your own before the class trip to “rehearse” your tour. Each person in the group **must contribute** to the tour.

Paper: Each group will also submit a 2-page paper about the site and its history, **with proper citations**, due on the day of your tour. You may use Wikipedia and any other web resources for this assignment.

Sites & dates:

Week 3: Viktoriapark & Schinkel's victory memorial

Week 4: Zoo and the Ku'Damm, including KaDeWe & the Gedächtniskirche

Week 5: Treptower park, with emphasis on the Soviet war memorial

Week 6: Frankfurter Allee OR the Wall museum at Bernauerstrasse

Week 7: The Reichstag, with a visit to the cupola

Week 8: Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Week 9: Potsdamer Platz

Weekly ethnographic photoblog (20% of your grade)

For this assignment, you will create a photography blog with weekly entries during weeks 2 – 9 that document your visual experience of Berlin. If you have no experience with blogging, I suggest using either tumblr.com or blogspot.com to create your blog; other sites or blogging tools are of course allowed if you prefer. Video is also allowed if you want to incorporate it, but it's up to you to manage the technical side of uploading and integrating it into your blog via Youtube, Vimeo, etc.

Requirements: Each week, you will be required to post at least one entry, consisting of at least 3 images (or videos) with commentary. Your commentary should be at least one paragraph long, and should relate your images to the class themes, readings and discussions. Blog entries must be posted by the beginning of class on Tuesday each week (in practice, you should post them by Monday night).

BE ADVISED: This blog should NOT be a catalog of your sightseeing adventures. Rather, this is a space for you to reflect on aspects of your visual experience in Berlin and develop themes and ideas that you can use in your final project. We will discuss your photos and experiences during the weekly ethnography portion of the seminars (on Thursdays).

Grading: This assignment will be graded on the basis of on-time completion, thoughtfulness and thoroughness. You will *not* be graded on the basis of your technical or artistic abilities!

Final visual ethnography project (15% of your grade)

Due December 6th

This assignment will be a curated and edited presentation of the photographic/visual/media work that you pursued in your photoblog project. You should present a careful selection of at least 10 photographs (or video/audio clips) that cohere around a theme of your choice. You may present your work in any way you wish: you can print photographs and hang them on the wall, make a book, present them in digital form on a website, or in whatever way seems appropriate to you. You may choose to include written text, sound or narration if you wish. Your project will be presented to the class and other guests on Wednesday, Dec. 6th at our student exhibition.

You should be thinking about this project well in advance of the due date, and discuss your ideas with the instructors during office hours.

Grading: You will be graded on the thoughtfulness and creativity of your image selection and presentation. Again, as for the photoblog, your technical and artistic abilities will *not* affect your grade.

Final paper (20% of your grade)

Due December 10th

In your final paper of 7-10 pages, you will draw on your experiences in the course (readings, field trips, discussions, and your own visual work) to present an analysis of the city as media and/or a historical text. You must reference at least 5 of the course readings in the paper. You may focus on any aspect or historical period of the city. Ideally, this paper will be a written counterpart to your final visual ethnography project, allowing you to explore and explain how your visual work ties in with what you learned in the course.

Class participation (5% of your grade)

Attendance at all activities is mandatory. You should come to meetings having thoroughly read the assigned texts and with questions or issues in mind to contribute to discussions. If you have to miss a meeting because of illness or other issues, please tell us right away.

Other notes:

You will need to have your passport and your HTH insurance card with you (in hand) for the first few days of the program. During this time we'll be taking care of various administrative tasks, such as registering with the police and applying for visas.

Important: Once you apply for a student visa (which is required), your passport may not be returned to you for up to one month. Please do not plan any travel outside Germany during this time. You can't board flights without a passport!

Weekly Schedule

In general, our weekly schedule will be as follows:

Monday: reading day

Tuesday: 10am-12pm – seminar; 2-4pm, student-led site visit or other walking tour

Wednesday: Class field trip (times will vary from an afternoon to all day)

Thursday: 10am-12pm – seminar; 12pm – 2pm – instructor office hours; movie night

Friday: morning – optional basic German tutorial (for the first few weeks) and/or travel to field sites

Weekends: (varies) trips to Weimar, Dresden, Leipzig, etc. – look on the schedule for details

It is imperative that you check the schedule regularly, as times and activities will vary from week to week! The schedule is posted on the course website and will be updated with any changes.

Detailed Course Schedule and Readings

9/28-9/30

Week 1: Introduction to Berlin and the course; administrative week

Wednesday, 9/28 11am – meet at Adalbertstrasse to begin the process of police registration, copying passports and other bureaucratic activities (**please bring your passport & insurance card**)

Thursday, 9/29 10am – Seminar
*Groups for walking tours assigned
Reading: Lowenthal, Past Time, Present Place
Huysen, Voids of Berlin

**three questions due*

Supplementary reading available: Boym

**After lunch we will continue with the visa/registration process*

Friday, 9/30 11am – optional German conversation group

10/3-10/7

Week 2: Germany, Year Zero(es)

World War II and the destruction of Imperial Berlin; The Wall

This week we will consider the two events that have most radically shaped Berlin's landscape in the 20th century: the bombings of World War II and the erection of the Berlin Wall. How do these events and their aftermath figure in the Berlin of today? The questions we ask here will continue as themes in our seminar throughout the semester.

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Intro & Ch. 1
Schivelbusch, The Prize (excerpt)
Sebald, Natural History of Destruction
Evans, Life Among the Ruins

**response paper due*

[Supplementary reading available: Vidler; Smail & Ross]

Wednesday Mitte exploration group activity

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Jay Ruby, Visual Anthropology
Hoey, What is Ethnography?
De Certeau, Walking in the City
A Woman in Berlin (you should have read this over the summer)

***three questions due**

Evening film: *The Murderers are Among Us*

[Optional viewing: *A Woman in Berlin; Germany Year Zero*]

Friday “Retreat” trip to the Pfaueninsel (optional conversation group to take place there)

10/10-10/14

Week 3: Athens on the Spree

Schinkel’s Berlin

The early 19th century was the beginning of Berlin’s trajectory toward becoming a world metropolis, and it has also provided an important reference point for those who want to rebuild the “historical” Berlin today. The period’s most important architect was Karl Friedrich Schinkel. His buildings and ideas reflect not just the spirit of the time, but an approach toward architecture that could be called “mediatic.” This week, we look at how he and others changed the shape and the face of Berlin and its surroundings, and why his ideas were – and are – so important for the history of the city.

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Ch. 2

Pundt, Berlin Before Schinkel’s Time

Toews, Building Historical Identities in Space and Stone (sections 1-3)

[Supplementary reading available: Taylor; Large; Richie (these are books – ask John for them)]

***response paper due**

2pm – walking tour with John

Wednesday Trip to Potsdam – all day (Sanssouci/Einsteinturm)

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Scott, Seeing Like a State, Ch. 2 (excerpts – pp. 53-63 and 73-end)

Foucault, Panopticism

Bentham, Panopticon

Forster, Schinkel as Sceneographer

***three questions due**

2pm – student-led site visit to Viktoriapark

***no evening film this week**

Friday 11am – optional German conversation group

Afternoon – optional trip to Schloss Charlottenburg

10/17-10/21

Week 4: Chicago on the Spree

Metropolis

By the late 19th century, Berlin was growing at an incredible rate, culminating in the image of the city in the 1920s as a world metropolis – a title that Berlin’s planners today yearn for the city to regain. This week we’ll look at the architecture, street life and the public image of Wilhelmine/ Weimar Berlin. What “snapshots” of the city during this period make it desirable to architects, planners and the public today? Are these images a true representation of the city at that time?

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Ch. 3, Metropolis

Schmidt, Architecture & Urban Planning, 1850-1914
 Hessel, Suspicious Character
 Gropius, Who is Right?
 Simmel, The Metropolis and Mental Life
 [Supplemental reading available: Kracauer; Benjamin, Berlin Chronicle]
 *response paper due
 2pm – student-led site visit to Zoo/Ku'Damm

Wednesday class visit to the Hufeisensiedlung & Gropiusstadt (with Ulf Heinsohn)

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Perce, Species of Spaces (excerpt)
 Geertz, Thick Description (excerpts)
 Benjamin, Theses on History
 Roth, What I Saw (excerpts)
 Keun, *The Artificial Silk Girl* (you should have read this over the summer)
 *three questions due
 [Supplementary reading available: Frisby, Ward]
 Evening films: *People on Sunday*; *Berlin, Symphony of a Great City*
 [Optional viewing: *The Blue Angel*]

Friday 11am – optional German conversation group

Afternoon – optional class visit to the Bauhaus museum

Saturday-Sunday *Trip to Weimar, with possible stop in Dessau (home to the most famous Bauhaus school)*

10/24-10/28

Week 5: Nazi Berlin

Hitler and his architect, Albert Speer, had big plans for Berlin. Only some of these were carried through, but many of their buildings still stand. How did architecture function in terms of Nazi power and image? What is the legacy of Nazi architecture in Berlin, and how has it been reintegrated into the cityscape?

Monday **1pm – 5pm: Photoethnography Workshop with Mark Curran**

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Ch. 4, Nazi Berlin
 Balfour, Politics of Order
 Theweleit, Dam and Flood
 Levi, “Judge for Yourselves!”
 *response paper due
 [Supplementary reading available: Jaskot, Jaskot & Rosenfeld]

Wednesday Dada & Expressionism tour (with Nico Anklam)

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Krase, Place, Space, Identity
 Baer, To give memory a place
 Foote, To Remember and Forget (for our trip to the Stasi Archives)
 *three questions due
 2pm – student-led site visit to Treptower park & the Soviet war memorial
 Evening film: *Cabaret*

Friday 11am – optional German conversation group

Weekend *Trip to Leipzig & Wittenberg*

10/31-11/4

Week 6: A City Divided

The Wall had a truly profound effect on Berlin's urban structure. This week we'll examine the architectural and cultural developments on either side of the Wall. What problems did they create for the reunited city, both physically and socially?

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Ch. 5, Divided Berlin
Urban, Neo-historical East Berlin
Moran, November in Berlin
[Supplemental reading available: Castillo]
***response paper due**

2pm – student-led site visit to Frankfurter Allee OR Bernauerstrasse

Wednesday Bernauerstrasse OR Frankfurter Allee (whatever students don't do)

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Virilio, The Overexposed City
Funder, *Stasiland* (excerpts)
Maron, Place of Birth: Berlin
Farmer, Symbols that face two ways
***three questions due**

[Supplementary reading available: Hensel (ask John for book)]

Evening film: *The Lives of Others*

Friday 11am – optional German conversation group – last official day (may continue if you wish)

Saturday **Trip to Sachsenhausen**

11/7/11/11

Week 7: Remaking History

Berlin after the Wende

As we've seen already this semester, after the fall of the Wall Berlin's planners embarked on a campaign to restore the "historical" city. But which history is being privileged in Berlin's new landscape? What was the planners' agenda, and what were its political and social implications?

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Ladd, Ch. 6
Schmaling, Masked Nostalgia, Chic Regression
Bergdoll, Reconstruction Doubts
Till, From Kiez to Cosmos
***response paper due**

[Supplemental reading available: Weszkalnys (excerpts); Balfour, Goebel, Koss]

2pm – student-led site visit to the Reichstag

Wednesday Tour with Berlin architecture blogger Jim Hudson

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Paeslack, Berlin in the Wende era
Situationist manifesto
Bach, Squatters
Veas-Giuliani: The Politics of New Beginnings (for our trip to Dresden)
***three questions due**

[Supplemental reading available: Vaughan, Hertel]

Evening film: *Wings of Desire*

[Optional viewing: *Run Lola Run*; *Goodbye Lenin*; *Berlin Babylon*]

Weekend **Trip to Dresden**

11/14-11/18

Week 8: Memorialization

Trauma, Landscape and Remembrance

As Berlin has remade itself as the capital of a European power, memorialization has become a crucial tactic for dealing with Germany's troubled past. What issues have surrounded Berlin's new memorial sites? How do these memorials function, and for whom? How has memorialization impacted Berlin's identity as a capital?

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Wiedmer, *The Claims of Memory*
Young, *At Memory's Edge* (excerpt)
Jordan, *Structures of Memory*
**response paper due*

2pm – student-led site visit to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Wednesday Day trip TBA

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Huyssen, *Nostalgia for Ruins*
Invisible Cities (excerpts)
**three questions due*

Evening film: *The Nasty Girl*

11/21-11/23

Tuesday: walking tour of Jewish and Islamic Berlin (with Ulf Heinsohn)

11/24-11/25 THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/28-12/2

Week 9: Multi-kulti Berlin

Who and what constitutes life in Berlin today? Whose voices are "heard" in the city, and who is visible? What issues remain regarding ethnic and cultural integration? Are things changing for the better?

Tuesday 10am – Seminar

Reading: Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties* (excerpt)
Habermas, *Leadership and Leitkultur*
Tölle, *Urban Identity Policies*
**response paper due*

2pm – student-led site visit to Potsdamer Platz

Wednesday Kreuzberg walking tour/talk with Andres Nader

Thursday 10am – Seminar

Hall, *Representation, Difference and Power* from *Spectacle of the Other*
Kaminer, *Russian Disco* (excerpts)
Ozdamar, *City of Birds*
NPR introductory articles (we'll listen to the radio story in class)

**three questions due*

Evening film: *Head-On*

12/5-12/8

Week 10: Student Exhibition

Monday & Tuesday John, Nara & Chance will be available to help you prepare your projects

Wednesday 4pm – 10pm – Student exhibition, presentation of students projects and final discussion

***final paper due**

***You must be moved out of Adalbertstrasse by Saturday, Dec. 10th.**