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## Cities of Capital, Crisis, and Contestation

Urban Studies 400: *Seminar in Urban Studies*

January-May, 2013

Mondays, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Geography Room 201

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/u400.html>

Consider a sample of what has happened in the last few years: The world crossed the fifty-percent urban threshold for the first time in history; capitalism became thoroughly transnational, with the growing economic integration of Brazil, Russia, India, and China; a worldwide financial bubble in housing and mortgages created astonishing wealth, but also crushing debt burdens; the bubble burst, destroying trillions of assets and triggering the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s; a series of technological advances -- especially in communications technologies -- accelerated the pace of change in production, distribution, and consumption; and in cities around the world, crowds came out into the streets, making claims *in*

and *to* their cities. An urbanized capitalist world is a world of speed, inequality, and contestation.

(How) are these things related? In this seminar, we'll choose a set of readings to engage this question. Below is the list of *potential* readings that we will consider; final selections will be made collaboratively, in class.

Paula Chakravartty and Denise Ferreira da Silva, editors (2012). *Race, Empire, and the Crisis of the Subprime*. Special Issue of *American Quarterly*, 64(3), September.

Manuel Aalbers, ed., *Subprime Cities: The Political Economy of Mortgage Markets*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Jonathan S. Davies and David L. Imbroscio, editors (2011). *Critical Urban Studies: New Directions*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Daniel Dorling (2011). *Injustice: Why Inequality Persists*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

David Harvey (2012). *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. London: Verso.

David Harvey (2011). *The Enigma of Capital and The Crises of Capitalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

David Harvey (2009). *Social Justice and the City, Revised Edition*. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press.

Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer (2011). *Cities for People, Not for Profit*. New York and London: Routledge.

Terry Eagleton (2011). *Why Marx Was Right*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Nicholas Carr (2011). *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Jaron Lanier (2010). *You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto*. New York: Knopf.

Erik Olin Wright (2010). *Envisioning Real Utopias*. London: Verso.

Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong (2011). *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

## **Evaluation**

Course marks are based on seminar participation (25 percent), paper-in-progress writing submissions (25 percent), and a final paper (50 percent). The final paper must be no more than

4,000 words, not counting references; include an abstract of no more than 150 words.

Suggestions for the paper-in-progress writing submissions include

- a. freewrite/brainstorm
- b. topic description
- c. problem statement
- d. literature review
- e. theoretical framework / research design
- f. methodological statement
- g. presentation of results / argument / synthesis
- h. complete drafts (1-n)

Each time we meet, I have a *deadline* and you have an *opportunity*: I will read and comment on whatever is placed on the table in front of me at the beginning of class -- printed on standard 8.5" x 11.0" paper. (I also encourage you to share your writing with colleagues in class, for their comments and recommendations).

An archive of seminar materials from previous years is available at

<http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~ewyly/u400.html>

These resources may be updated from time to time. All other necessary details and recommendations will be provided in class. Please join us. A good seminar is a bit like a city; let's build one together!