

AMST 334  
Urban America  
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY  
GHH 105  
T, TH 12:30 -1:50  
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Week of September 15

For *Tuesday, September 15*

We're likely to be a little behind given my day out sick. Rather than rush us through Chapter 6, originally assigned for last Thursday (which I described as the most difficult chapter in the readings of last week) I'm going to delay it until Tuesday of this week., and give it the time it deserves.

Repeating last week's notes:

This chapter may be the most difficult of all in this assignment. This is not Jacobs' fault, particularly, but the fault of our own preconceptions about neighborhoods and what it means to be someone's neighbor. We're going to have to move to different sorts of definitions here. Jacobs wants us to understand three levels of "neighborhood," all of which have to function simultaneously if a city is to function well. If this is the case, simple geography can't be the entire definer of neighborhood or neighborliness.

For *Thursday September 17.*

I'll introduce some tools I haven't introduced until now: tools which will help in your research for visual materials on the Internet. Among them, Flickr and Panoramio and Youtube...two of these integrate with Google Earth.

I'm hoping we'll be able to finalize the city investigation groups this week, and the get a very good start on determining which cities we're going to investigate. Unless I'm hearing loud noises protesting, I'm going to suggest we set the limit to eight cities. This would mean five groups of four and three groups of five. Before this date, either Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> or Tuesday the fifteenth, I'll hold some time at the end of a class session to talk with those who might be interested in taking on a leadership role in their groups. Today I hope we can have the group memberships determined and also have begun a short list of American Cities from which the final eight will be chosen.

I'd also like to have you do some visual exploring related to Jane Jacob's ideas about what good cities, parks and neighborhoods are. Full instructions are on the web version of the syllabus.

Good Choices:

- Share the characteristics of "great cities" as Jane Jacobs defines them: they are, in other words, memorable for a number of reasons. They should be products of multiple "developments across a significant period of time.
- Taken together, they should represent a broad cross-section of the Urban scene in America. They should not all come from the same region of the country or be too similar in size.
- They should be old enough to have a historical record, indicating how they have changed across time.
  - They should have a wide range of primary sources available on line: these would include
    1. Newspapers, including historic newspapers
    2. Photographs
    3. Vintage film, newsreels
    4. Online local radio, both talk and music
    5. Government and education pages, including statistical data on everything from crime to economic activity
    6. Access to the world of non-profit organizations there. Who are the helpers and what kind of help are they seeking to provide?
    7. Tourist pages as appropriate
    8. Business organizations like the Chamber of Commerce Online..

No city need have all of these resources available, But the fewer of these there are the more difficult it will become to do project which gives a reasonable picture of life in that city.

Between now and class prowl around for potential cities to put on the first cut list. Find what you can find, and talk about it in your journals.