

AMST 334
Urban America
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
GHH 108
M, Th 3:30 - 4:50
Spring, 2011

MICHAEL R. H. SWANSON Ph. D.
OFFICE: GHH 215
Hours: T, Th 9:00-10:30
M, W 1:00-2:00
PHONE: (254)-3230
Email: mswanson@rwu.edu

Week of Monday, February 21

For *Monday, February 21*– (which actually happens on Wednesday the 23rd)

Happy President's day. Of course nobody remember the real birthdays of either Abraham Lincoln or George Washington. Plus you folks are getting cheated. When I was in school we got both birthdays off. I've never thought the transfer to a Monday worth that.

I want to spend this day familiarizing you with a number of tools which you'll use both to help visualize and interpret our readings and to prepare your group and urb reports. Some of them I linked on the first page of the syllabus for the week of January 31. I've provided links to some of the others on the web version of this syllabus, where I've also provided a link to my online bookmark collection. MURL stands for My Universal Resource Locator– URLs are web addresses. MURL provides a bookmarking service free. Donations accepted, and recommended.

The idea right now is not so much to locate information about your cities as it is to locate *sources* of information about your cities. We have treasure troves of sources–academic, commercial, governmental–museums, historical societies, and private individuals sharing their views and ideas online. As I won't be seeing you for almost a week, and then I'll be seeing two days back to back, this seems like a good time to send you treasure hunting. Right now, the assignment is to find "something interesting" from as many different kinds of sources as you can, posting the information to your personal journal. If you can find things which relate to Jacobs that's even better. But I want a big enough sample of materials to keep us well occupied on Wednesday next. I ought to provide a prize for the most interesting journal. Who knows, maybe I will. When you're not browsing the 'net, read ahead in Jacobs. The chapters for Thursday aren't hard or long, but I'd like to cover them well.

For *Thursday, February 24.*

Read, in Jacobs.

Chapter 8. The Need for Mixed Primary Uses ML 198 - 232

Chapter 9. The Need for Small Blocks ML 233 - 243

Chapters 8 - 11 are going to be easy to read and digest. The important thing is to make sure you understand the four conditions, one per chapter, which are presented in italics. Now that we've got our cities sorted out, I'd like to have you prowl around various areas in your city, using "Streetview" on Google Maps. Find areas which qualify as meeting those conditions and find areas which fail them. Post links to these in your journals so we can explore them together. Remember we're working in districts or neighborhoods. Regardless of city, some work well, some don't: your job is to help us spot those that do and those that don't in our gallery of cities—Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Honolulu, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Savannah.

Chapter eight provides more detail related to ideas which Jacobs presented in the chapters on sidewalks and parks. The idea is to have people out and about in significant numbers all through the day. If you have a grasp of what constitutes a primary use this will not be difficult. She gives an example of a single use district which has severe, almost insoluble problems (as she defines them). Some of you have visited the area. If you've visited it on a Sunday morning you'll know what she's talking about. You'll see it up above.

Chapter nine is a short chapter dealing with a short subject. It should occupy your attention for a short time. All this shortness is making me feel gigantic.