

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

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Week of May 2, 2011

Wrapping It All Up

So much Urbanity, so little time. Every time I teach this course, I wish the semester were a little longer, or perhaps the could could stretch over two semesters. Alas, there are three more classes, two this week, and the final one on Monday, May 9.

Our city reports will take place Thursday the 12th, and Friday the 13th. Friday the 13th will be from 10:00 to Noon in our ordinary classroom. I will set a time and place for our Thursday Presentations as soon as I can. It might be possible to schedule for early next week instead of the 12th, depending on two things: First, room availability based on who is and who isn't giving an in-class final, and second, your availability depending on your other scheduled finals. Consequently I'll be passing around a sheet this day asking you to let me know what other days you have final examinations.

For *Monday May 2, 2011*

A transition from Suarez to Ezell.

The last half of the twentieth century was not entirely good to our major cities, as the census numbers in Suarez's introduction indicated to us. Beyond those, we've seen how the interstate highway system and the evolution of satellite cities on the outer edge of the city has drained life and resources from the center.

But also as Jacobs has showed us, Cities are tough to kill, even if those in charge do all the wrong things for all the right reasons. And it would seem that a number of our cities are staging modest comebacks—and positioning themselves for major comebacks if energy prices continue to escalate. We'll be looking at this in a number of ways, Starting with Kyle Ezell's *Get Urban*. For now, I want to have you read just the introduction, pp. xv - xxii. This is a book on a mission. You need to find out what the mission is. I'm also going to ask you to prepare a short questionnaire, which you'll

find on the class website, and bring it with you to class on Monday. The questionnaire will help you determine what kind of “urb” fits your temperament and personality.

Knowing that this is Spring Weekend (seems awfully late this year) I’m going to do something I very rarely do—schedule two videos back to back. That way you should be able to attend as many of the festivities as you desire, and still get the seven pages of Ezell read.

The video, “The End of Suburbia” will provide a rationale for seriously considering a more urban lifestyle. Hint: Take a look at the price of a gallon of gas over the weekend.

For *Thursday, May 5*

I’m going to do something I also rarely do. Your readings in Ezell will be based on the questionnaires you’ll fill out and turn in on Monday, and I’ll send them to you individually, by e-mail.