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### History of Architecture and Urbanism in New York City

Malka Simon

*CUNY Brooklyn College*

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Brooklyn College  
Spring 2015

## **Art 3164**

### **History of Architecture and Urbanism in New York City**

Instructor: Prof. Malka Simon  
Lecture: Fridays 9:30-12:15, Section F9, 5313 Boylan  
Credits: 3  
Office hours: Wednesdays 12:30-1:30 and by appointment in 5109 Boylan  
Contact: msimon@brooklyn.cuny.edu

### **Course Description**

This course will explore the history of architecture and urbanism in New York City from the colonial period through the present day. We will study well-known monuments along with lesser-known but important works, and consider the political, cultural, and economic factors that fueled the development of New York's built environment. This course will situate the architecture of New York City within the broader discourse of American architectural history, and will examine the impact that New York had on nationwide architectural trends. Classroom lectures will be supplemented regularly with site visits across the city.

### **Course Requirements**

Midterm (20%)  
Paper (35%)  
Final (30%)  
Presentations (10%)  
Attendance/Participation (5%)

### **Suggested Text**

There is no required textbook for this class. However, you may wish to purchase the following:

Norval White and Elliot Willensky with Fran Leadon. *AIA Guide to New York City, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* New York: Oxford, 2010.

An excellent guide to New York City's major works of architecture; comprehensive and concise. Available online and at local bookstores. Earlier editions are available for reference in the main library.

### **Course Structure**

This class consists of two parts: classroom lectures for roughly the first half of the semester and site visits for the second half.

Lectures: Students are expected to complete **at least** three of each week's readings and come to class prepared to discuss the topic at hand. Weekly readings will be posted on Blackboard

and/or made available on the reserve shelf for this course at the Bernstein Library (5300 Boylan).

Site visits: Site visits are an integral part of this course and will occur rain or shine. We will walk a lot, so wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather. Make sure to bring your Metrocard. I will confirm the starting point and meeting time of each week's site visit one week in advance. If you are running late and miss our group at the meeting point, please call one of your colleagues for our precise location.

In addition, students will take turns offering short presentations that elaborate upon the theme of that week's visit. Working in small groups, you will explain to the class the overall historical and architectural relevance of that week's buildings and sites, and offer questions for further consideration and discussion. Once groups have been assigned, I will meet with you to discuss my expectations in greater detail.

If a site visit has an assigned reading listed, all students are required to complete that reading and be prepared to discuss it. See schedule below for details.

### **Paper, Exams, Attendance**

Students will write a paper on a topic relating to the architectural development of New York City. Details will follow shortly.

The midterm and final will cover all material discussed in the lectures and site visits as well as assigned readings. The final will not be cumulative. Students will be responsible for all images discussed in class unless otherwise noted. Images will be posted on BlackBoard for you to review.

**Please note that I do not give make-up exams or accept late assignments.** You must submit assignments on time and make sure to be in class for exams. If you fail to adhere to this policy, you will receive a grade of zero for the missing item, which will be factored into your average. If extraordinary circumstances arise, be prepared to provide documentation (police report, doctor's note, death certificate, etc.).

Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in a deduction from your course grade. Note that the bulk of the exam material will be taken from the lectures, so it behooves you to attend class and take detailed notes. If you do not attend regularly you will not do well in this class! Furthermore, you are expected to participate in class. Your questions and critiques are important in helping to make this class engaging and thought-provoking for everyone.

Please keep in mind that the last day to withdraw from a class is Thursday April 24. If you have any concerns about your progress in this class, I encourage you to meet with me well in advance of this deadline in order to discuss your best course of action.

**A note on academic integrity:**

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

**A note on the Center for Student Disability Services:**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide me with the course accommodation form and we will discuss your specific accommodation.

**Weekly Schedule**

See the course bibliography for complete bibliographic information on the readings below. Note that site visit schedule is tentative and subject to change.

**January 31**

Introduction

"Remarks of the Commissioners for Laying out Streets and Roads in the City of New York," (1811), pp. 116-23 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.

Keith D. Revell, "Regulating the Landscape: Real Estate Values, City Planning, and the 1916 Zoning Ordinance," pp. 19-45 in Ward and Zunz, *Landscape of Modernity*.

Carl Condit, "The Development of the Dock, Rail, and Bridge System of New York City, 1870-1920," pp. 33-46 in *Berlin-New York*.

**February 7**

Production and consumption – industry and retail in New York City

"Creating New York's Retail District," ch. 2 in Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities*.

"Stores," pp. 705-730 in Robert AM Stern, *New York 1880*.

"Industrial Buildings," pp. 516-526; and "Ely Jacques Kahn," pp. 551-563, in Robert AM Stern, *New York 1930*.

**Introduction, Historical Background, and selected building profiles, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *West Chelsea Historic District Designation Report***

**February 14**

Coming home – housing types and residential patterns

"Rich and Poor," ch. 3 in Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City*.

M. Christine Boyer, "The Fabrication of Style on the Upper East Side," ch. 5 in *Manhattan Manners*.

Lawrence Veiller, "The Tenement House Exhibition of 1899," (1901), pp. 422-29 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.

Richard Pommer, "Neighborhood Block and Garden Court: New York City Housing Between the World Wars," pp. 265-80, in *Berlin-New York*.

Daniel Schaffer, "New York and the Garden City Movement Between the Wars," pp. 93-110 in *Berlin-New York*.

**February 21**

Up we go – the skyscraper evolves

Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit, "Technological Preparations," ch. 2 in *Rise of the New York Skyscraper, 1865-1913*.

Gail Fenske and Deryck Holsworth, "Corporate Identity and the New York Office Building," pp. 129-59 in Ward and Zunz, *The Landscape of Modernity*.

Carol Willis, "Form Follows Finance," pp. 160-87 in Ward and Zunz, *The Landscape of Modernity*.

Michael W. Brooks, "Skyscraper and Subway," ch. 5 in *Subway City: Riding the Trains, Reading New York*.

Le Corbusier, "'The Fairy Catastrophe'" from "'When the Cathedrals Were White,'" (1936), pp. 611-18 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.

**February 28**

Time to relax – parks, recreation, and entertainment

Frederick Law Olmsted, "The Plan for the Park," (1858) pp. 278- 281 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.

Marta Gutman, "Equipping the Public Realm: Rethinking Robert Moses and recreation," pp. 72-85 in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*.

Rem Koolhaas, "Coney Island: The Technology of the Fantastic," pp. 29-79 in *Delirious New York*

M. Christine Boyer, "The theater district," pp. 62-77 in *Manhattan Manners*.

"Theaters," pp.229-69 in Robert AM Stern, *New York 1930*

### **March 7**

The death and life of New York – urban decline and rebirth

Ada Louise Huxtable, "Farewell to Penn Station," *The New York Times*, October 30, 1963.

Hilary Ballon, "Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title I Program," pp. 94-115, in *Robert Moses and the Modern City*.

Robert Fishman, "Revolt of the Urbs: Robert Moses and His Critics," pp. 122-29, in *Robert Moses and the Modern City*.

Introduction and conclusion in Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York*.

### **March 14**

Midterm exam

Paper research session

### **March 21**

Site visit – The Financial District

Themes: Early settlement in Manhattan; the architecture of finance

### **March 28**

Site visit – The architecture of industry in Sunset Park

Themes: Intersections of industrial production and architectural innovation; what is an industrial landscape?

**Reading: Cass Gilbert, "Industrial Architecture in Concrete," in *The Architectural Forum* (September 1923): 83-86**

### **April 4**

Old Brooklyn – The Wyckoff House

Themes: Early architecture in New York; shifting patterns of urban settlement and density

**April 11**

Queens – Sunnyside Gardens and the World's Fair grounds at Flushing Meadows Park

Themes: Variety in housing; utopian visions

**April 25**

Site visit – Midtown Manhattan

Themes: The evolving skyscraper; public spaces in urban places; transportation and circulation in the city

**May 2**

Site visit – Prospect Park

Themes: Landscape architecture in the city; what should a park look like?

**Reading: Frederick Law Olmsted, "Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns," (1870) pp. 281- 291 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.**

**May 9**

Site visit – Brooklyn Heights and Brooklyn Bridge Park

Themes: Housing in New York; change in the city

**Reading: Lewis Mumford, "The Brooklyn Bridge," from *Sketches from Life* (1981) pp. 840-844 in Jackson and Dunbar, *Empire City*.**

**Papers due last day of class, May 9th**

**Final exam (tentative): May 23rd, 8-10 am**

Prof. Simon  
Brooklyn College  
Spring 2015

**Art 3164/7097**  
**History of Architecture and Urbanism in New York City**  
**Spring 2015**

**Selected Bibliography**

Items marked with a \* are on the reserve shelf for this course in the main library. Items marked with a \*\* are available as reference copies in the main library. Items marked with a \*\*\* are available for reference in the Brooklyn Collection.

**All links (except where noted) represent availability at Brooklyn College Library.**

General Interest:

\*Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace. [\*Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898\*](#). New York: Oxford University Press, 1998

\*\*Kenneth T. Jackson, ed. [\*The Encyclopedia of New York City\*](#). New Haven: Yale University Press; New York: New-York Historical Society, 1995.

eBook available to:

- all [CUNY students](#)
- [Brooklyn College](#)
- [Graduate Center](#)

Kenneth T. Jackson and David S. Dunbar. [\*Empire City: New York Through the Centuries\*](#). New York: Columbia University Press, 2002 **Available at CUNY libraries.**

\*\*\*Ellen M. Snyder-Grenier. [\*Brooklyn! An Illustrated History\*](#). Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996.

Urban Planning and Development

\*Thomas Adams. [\*The Building of the City\*](#). New York: Regional Plan of New York and its Environs, 1931.

\*Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson, eds. [\*Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York\*](#). New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2007.

Board of Estimate and Apportionment of the City of New York. [\*Final Report of the Commission of Building Districts and Restrictions\*](#). New York: Board of Estimate and Apportionment, 1916.

**Via Internet Archive.**



Kevin Bone, ed. [\*The New York Waterfront: Evolution and Building Culture of the Port and Harbor\*](#). New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

Todd. W. Bressi, ed. [\*Planning and Zoning New York City Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow\*](#). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

Michael W. Brooks. [\*Subway City: Riding the Trains, Reading New York\*](#). New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, c1997.

Mona Domosh. [\*Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston\*](#). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

David A. Johnson [\*Planning the Great Metropolis: The 1929 Regional Plan of New York and its Environs\*](#). London, New York: E&FN Spon, 1996. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

Ada Louise Huxtable, "[Farewell to Penn Station](#)," *The New York Times*, October 30, 1963. **Available via** [ProQuest Historical Newspapers: the New York Times](#)

\*\*\*Marc Linder and Lawrence S. Zacharias. [\*Of Cabbages and Kings County: Agriculture and the Formation of Modern Brooklyn\*](#). University of Iowa Press, 1999.

\*Randall Mason. [\*The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern City\*](#). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

eBook available to:

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- [Brooklyn College](#)
- [Graduate Center](#)

\*David Ward and Olivier Zunz, eds. [\*The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900-1940\*](#). New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992.

## Architecture and Building Types

Hilary Ballon. [\*New York's Pennsylvania Stations\*](#). New York: WW Norton, 2002. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

\*M. Christine Boyer. [\*Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style, 1850-1900\*](#). New York: Rizzoli, 1985.

Thomas J. Campanella. "Playground of the Century: A Political and Design History of New York City's Greatest Unbuilt Park," in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*. Vol. 72, No. 2, June 2013

Andrew S. Dolkart. [\*Biography of a Tenement House in New York City: An Architectural History of 97 Orchard Street\*](#). Santa Fe and Staunton: The Center for American Places, 2006. . **Available at CUNY libraries.**

\*Andrew S. Dolkart and Matthew A. Postal. [\*Guide to New York City Landmarks\*](#). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004.

\*Hugh Ferriss. [\*The Metropolis of Tomorrow\*](#). New York: Yves Washburn, 1929.

Cass Gilbert, "Industrial Architecture in Concrete," in *The Architectural Forum* (September 1923): 83-86.

Josef Paul Kleihues and Christina Rathberger, eds. [\*Berlin New York: Like and Unlike. Essays on Architecture and Art from 1870 to the Present\*](#). New York: Rizzoli, 1993. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

Rem Koolhaas. [\*Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan\*](#). New York: Rizzoli, 1994. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

\*Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit. [\*Rise of the New York Skyscraper, 1865-1913\*](#). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

Alexandra Lange, "The Beauty of a Park," *Design Observer*, 6/17/2009: available at <http://observatory.designobserver.com/entry.html?entry=8747>

\*Charles Lockwood. [\*Bricks and Brownstone: The New York Row House, 1783-1929\*](#). New York: Rizzoli, 2003.

\*\*\*Francis Morrone. [\*An Architectural Guidebook to Brooklyn\*](#). Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 2001.

Lewis Mumford. [\*Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York\*](#). Robert Wojtowicz, ed. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

eBook available to:

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- [Brooklyn College](#)
- [Graduate Center](#)

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. [\*Dumbo Historic District Designation Report\*](#). New York: The Commission, 2007. **Available from Neighborhood Preservation Center.**

----- [\*West Chelsea Historic District Designation Report\*](#). New York: The Commission, 2008. **Available from Neighborhood Preservation Center.**

New York Transit Museum. [Subway Style: 100 Years of Architecture and Design in the New York City Subway](#). New York: Stewart, Tabori, and Chang, 2004.

Frederick Law Olmsted. [Creating Central Park, 1857-1861](#). C.E. Beveridge and D. Schuyler, eds. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983. [contains the Greensward competition design and accompanying studies] **Available at CUNY libraries.**

"The Ornamentation of the new subway stations in New York" in *House and Garden*, 1904 February, vol. 5, pp 96-9; 1904 June, pp 287-92

\*Richard Plunz. [A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Types and Social Change in the American Metropolis](#). New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Rebecca Read Shanor. [The City That Never Was: Two Hundred Years of Fantastic and Fascinating Plans That Might Have Changed the Face of New York City](#). New York: Viking, 1988.

Paul Shaw. [Helvetica and the New York City Subway System](#). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

\*Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman. [New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age](#). New York: Monacelli, 1999.

\*Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Montague Massengale. [New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism](#). New York: Rizzoli, 1983.

\*Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins. [New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars](#). New York: Rizzoli, 1987.

Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman. [New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism between the Second World War and the Bicentennial](#). New York: Monacelli, 1995.

Robert A.M. Stern, David Fishman, Jacob Tilove. [New York 2000: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Bicentennial and the Millennium](#). New York: Monacelli, 2006.

Squire J. Vickers. "Architectural treatment of stations on the dual system of rapid transit in New York City" in *Architectural Record*, 1919 January, vol. 45, pp 15-20.

Norval White and Elliot Willensky with Fran Leadon. *AIA Guide to New York City*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Oxford, 2010. **1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th editions available at CUNY libraries.**

Carol Willis. [Form Follows Finance](#). New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995. **Available at CUNY libraries.**

Art 3164  
Architecture and Urbanism in NYC  
Spring 2015  
Prof. Simon

## **Paper Assignment**

Your assignment is to write a guidebook that centers around one aspect of New York architecture and urbanism. You may write about a building type (skyscrapers, retail shops, etc.) or you may focus on a particular neighborhood.

The paper will consist of two basic parts: First, you must situate your topic in its appropriate socio-historical context. For example, if you are writing a guide to the Upper West Side, you would need to explain its evolution and development as a neighborhood. Second, you must offer an architectural description and analysis of at least ten buildings or sites that are significant to your topic. Your formal analysis of the sites should be supplemented with some discussion of the site's history. However, I want the focus of your entries to remain on the appearance of the work you're describing. You should visit each of the sites you write about, and photograph them as well. Your final paper must include your own photos of the works you write about (you may supplement these with historic/professional images).

**You must submit your topic to me for approval by Friday March 14.** In Addition, you must submit a paper outline that includes at least five proposed buildings/sites by **Friday April 4**. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in a penalty on your final paper grade. Please be in touch with me about your proposals if you have any questions. Consult the bibliography for this course to begin your research, and please see me with any questions you might have. You can find an excellent guide to researching buildings in NYC on the website of Columbia's Avery Architectural Library:

**<http://library.columbia.edu/subject-guides/avery/nycbuild.html>**

It is of utmost importance that you document your sources properly. I prefer Chicago style, but you may use any citation style as long as you use it properly and consistently. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Remember, you must footnote the ideas of others, as well as direct quotations. Make sure you know what plagiarism means, and if you are at all uncertain please see me to discuss.

**PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC GRADE OF F FOR BOTH THE PAPER AND THE COURSE.**

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss the assignment and any questions you may have. Drop-in office hours are on Wednesdays from 12:30-1:30 in 5109 Boylan and other times by appointment. Please be in touch via email if you cannot meet with me in person ([msimon@brooklyln.cuny.edu](mailto:msimon@brooklyln.cuny.edu)). Additionally, you can get help writing your paper from the Art Department's field writing tutors, Kurt Johnson and

Paul D'Agostino; they hold office hours in the Bernstein Art Library (5300 Boylan). Their hours this semester are as follows:  
Monday 9-12:30 (Paul); Tuesday 9-12 (Kurt); Wednesday 9-12:30 (Paul) and 1-4 (Kurt); Thursday 9-2 and 6-7(Kurt).

Papers should be about 10 pages in length (not including images).

**Final papers are due in person on the last day of class, Friday May 9th.** Hard copies only: no electronic copies will be accepted. You must also upload a digital copy your paper to Safe Assign, via Blackboard. No late papers will be accepted. No exceptions.

Below is a grading rubric for this assignment:

	Excellent (25 points)	Good (22 points)	Satisfactory (19 points)	Fair (16 points)	Poor (13 points)
Introduction	Research subject is strongly defined. Thorough explanation of all the relevant historic and architectural issues.	Research subject is defined. Explains most of the relevant historic and architectural issues.	Research subject is somewhat ambiguous. Superficial explanation of relevant historic and architectural issues.	Research subject is weakly defined. Inadequate explanation of relevant historic and architectural issues.	No clear research subject. No explanation of relevant historic and architectural issues.
Site/Building history	Clearly explains the entire relevant history of the buildings or sites.	Clearly explains most of the relevant history of the buildings or sites.	Superficially explains most of the relevant history of the buildings or sites.	Poorly explains some of the relevant history of the buildings or sites.	No explanation of the relevant histories of the buildings or sites is provided.
Formal analysis	Thoroughly and critically describes the buildings or sites, using precise architectural terminology	Adequately describes the buildings or sites, using appropriate architectural terminology	Superficially describes the buildings or sites; architectural terminology is ambiguous or unclear	Poorly describes the buildings or sites, using incorrect architectural terminology	No description of the buildings or sites.
Writing quality	Text is well-organized with logical flow from section to section. Language is clear and precise. Sources are clearly and thoroughly documented.	Text is adequately organized with mostly logical flow from section to section. Language is clear. Sources are adequately documented.	Text is loosely-organized and lacks logical flow from section to section. Language is imprecise with some misspellings. Documentation of sources is imprecise.	Text is poorly-organized with little logical flow from section to section. Language is vague with many misspellings. Many sources are missing.	Text is disorganized with no logical flow from section to section. Language is unclear with many misspellings. Sources are not documented.

Failure to adhere to the deadlines for submission of the paper topic and outline will result in a deduction of 3 points for each missed deadline.